THE Nation

VOLUME 143 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • NOVEMBER 14, 1936 NUMBER 20

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The Shape of Things

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ALTHOUGH MADRID IS STILL HOLDING OUT as we go to press, the possibility of its continued resistance appears exceedingly slim. With no means of obtaining food and supplies from the outside world except by a single road from the coast, the only hope of saving the city lies in the sudden appearance of a well-equipped relief army from Valencia or Barcelona. Meanwhile, every day that the embattled residents of Madrid can hold up the Moors and Foreign Legion adds to the chances of an ultimate government victory. Uncensored reports from rebel territory indicate that the peasants and city population in some sectors are continually rising to harass the enemy's rear guard. The entire Mediterranean coast from Port Bou to Malaga remains in government hands, as does the Atlantic coast from near San Sebastian to Gijon. Even without Madrid half of the population of Spain is in loyalist territory. Given a fair opportunity to purchase arms and ammunition from abroad, the overwhelming pro-government majority in these areas ought to be able to organize an effective defense, particularly if the workers of Madrid can inflict serious losses on the Moors. The chances of the loyalists are enhanced by the very real possibility that France's long-standing interest in Catalonia may cause Blum to recognize and support Catalan independence. Catalonia is by far the richest province in Spain, the center of its industry, and relatively isolated geographically. Already far advanced on the road to social revolution, it could readily serve as the nucleus for the new Spain which will yet emerge from the ashes of the present conflict.

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THE FARMERS AND WORKERS WHO HELPED elect Mr. Roosevelt are not letting any grass grow under their feet, now that the balloting is over. Various labor groups have already put forward a list of "must" legislation for the new Congress. This includes in effect a new NRA—the abolition of unfair competition in industry, the regulation of wages and hours, the abolition of child labor. A new Guffey bill for the coal industry is urged by Mr. Lewis, to include not only the bituminous but the anthracite industry. The Wagner-Ellenbogen housing bill, favored by the President in the last days of the old Congress, is also on the agenda, and pressure will be brought for amendment of the Social Security Act so that the employees' contribution to old-age annuities will be transferred to the employers. This last is, in itself, a neat retort

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to the pay-roll campaign of the Republicans in the final days before election. The farmers are equally vigorous in pressing for a better agricultural program. A group of 150 farmers' representatives, called to Washington to confer with the President's Committee on Crop Insurance, had very little to say about crop insurance and a good deal to say about the necessity for a new AAA and the control of distribution, "in spite of what the Supreme Court says about it." As if in answer to these prayers, Mr. Roosevelt, in a message to the National Conference on Labor Legislation, promised to ask for legislation which would provide "safe and healthful places of work; adequate care and support when incapacitated by reason of accidents, industrial disease, unemployment, or old age; reasonably short working hours; adequate annual income; proper housing; and elimination of child labor." This takes care of everybody but the farmers; but they have given evidence that they will not allow themselves to be forgotten.

*

IN THE NEW CONGRESS THERE WILL BE 17 Republican Senators out of 96 and 89 Republican members of the House of Representatives out of 435. Four Republican governors were elected and three held over, making a total of seven out of forty-eight. Pennsylvania Republicans lost control of both houses of the state legislature, and in Delaware, Rhode Island, and New Jersey the G. O. P. could capture only one house. The defeat of a once proud and unassailable political party was a rout, and it was effected by the party which twelve years ago was pretty generally described as dead. Curiously enough, although diehard business men were united before election in predicting the collapse of the American industrial system if Governor Landon were defeated, the stock market showed a healthy activity as soon as the returns were in, and by Thursday stocks had advanced from one to seven and three-quarter points. Even public-utility stocks, which suffered a slight decline the first day, soon picked up to their former levels. The New York *Times* index of fifty stocks advanced to the highest level since July, 1931. The poll of the minor parties, including the Union Party and the New York American Labor Party, appears not to have greatly exceeded a million votes. In the Senate one Progressive, two Farmer-Laborites, and one independent make only a modest showing; in the House there will be five Farmer-Laborites and seven Progressives. Minnesota elected a Farmer-Labor governor, North Dakota an independent, and Wisconsin a Progressive. It was Mr. Roosevelt's day all around. The minor parties, including the Republican, didn't have a chance.

*

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD TO WHAT LEVELS THE Republican strategy descended in the last desperate attempt to elect Mr. Landon. We have it on reliable authority that early last summer there was a definite understanding between the Democratic and Republican parties that the Social Security Act was not to be used as an issue in the campaign if only because it had been passed with strong Republican support. In line with this understanding, the Social Security Board refrained from issuing any literature addressed directly to workers. It merely put out routine and pretty dull information. When the Landon attack came, the board was unprepared to cope with it. The employers followed the Landon attack by stuffing pay envelopes with lies about the tax; yet it was not until the closing days of the campaign that the Security Board got out a leaflet addressed to workers explaining the provisions of the act. Meanwhile the Republican cry of dictatorship and regimentation rose higher and higher, reaching a climax on November 2. On that day the New York *Sun* printed a lurid tale charging that "New Deal Will Tag Workers." The story had come out of the mouth—and out of the imagination—of John D. M. Hamilton. It was illustrated with two pictures, one of the metal tag itself and one showing a handsome but tagged victim of social security. The *Sun* obviously had strong doubts of the accuracy of the story. The caption over the pictures read: "Everyone *May* Have to Have One" (italics ours); and the legend underneath ran as follows: "Suggested 'dog tag' for 'security' tax and how it will look on a taxpayer. Such a tag has been prepared and submitted to the Social Security Board *for approval.*" Four days later, in the same position in the *Sun,* appeared the official explanation of the act and the statement that the worker would be provided with a card, not a tag. In the interim the answer to the stuffed pay envelope had been ballot boxes stuffed with labor's vote against the Republicans.

*

THE FALL OF THE PROPHETS WAS ALMOST AS impressive as the defeat of the press. Forget all the Republican oracles; their errors of judgment were a part of their job. Even Mr. Hamilton's forecast of victory at eleven o'clock on Election Night may be put down to a loyal spirit and a buoyant disposition. Let the dead bury their dead, and turn to the Democrats themselves. Save only Mr. Farley, one and all, the President included, underestimated the extent of Democratic victory. Mr. Roosevelt in his final and most optimistic guess gave himself 360 electoral votes and Governor Landon 171. They were equally wrong about the popular vote, and about the number of states their party would carry. As for the straw-vote takers, the public-opinion samplers, their downfall was a sensational feature of the result. The *Fortune* survey was very close to accurate, but, as Paul Ward shows this week, the Gallup poll was wide of the mark, while the *Digest* poll can only be looked upon as a major casualty of the election. But we understand that the straw-vote boys got together after the obsequies and figured out a satisfactory explanation. The error, it seems, was not in their methods or even in their results. It was the election itself that came out wrong. They are thinking of contesting the result.

*

MEANWHILE *THE NATION* LOOKS BACK WITH modest pride at the more general predictions that adorned its preelection pages. As early as June 3 we announced editorially, "Mr. Roosevelt will win the election. He has a safe margin of victory now, with enough to spare even

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for the accidents of the intervening months." From then on our political commentators stood firm for a Roosevelt sweep. Our writers took no polls; they looked at the country with the cold, unsympathetic eye of the political reporter and told what they saw, and what they saw was the truth. Paul Ward predicted the Roosevelt landslide from his first campaign article. Early in August he called thirty-one states "sure" for Roosevelt and gave Landon six "at the moment." His assurance increased as the campaign went along. After traveling with Landon through four supposedly doubtful states—Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana—and talking to Republican leaders, he said, "I would not give a nickel for Landon's chances of carrying any one of them, and if their total of 88 electoral votes goes to Roosevelt atop the 105 votes he will get from the solid South and those he is certain to get from the West, Landon will go down to defeat on November 3 in a Democratic landslide of 1932 dimensions." Two other "doubtful" states were disposed of by two other not at all doubtful observers. Carl Randau stated flatly, "President Roosevelt will carry New York." Jesse Laventhol presented a close analysis of all the conflicting factors in Pennsylvania leading to the equally definite conclusion that Pennsylvania would swing to the President. These predictions lead us to place our faith in the judgment of experienced men rather than in the dubious mathematics of polls and tests.

*

IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER EVEN PRESIDENT Roosevelt's presence at Buenos Aires can arouse popular enthusiasm for the Inter-American Peace Conference opening December 1. The conference has been called to consider the creation of "new instruments of peace." The existing system of conciliation and arbitration is admittedly confused and defective at many points. But in view of the difficulties encountered in the past in securing general ratification of multilateral pacts, it is doubtful that the conference will seek to formulate a new general treaty. On the crucial issue of collective action the Latin American countries are hopelessly divided. Argentina favors both non-recognition of territorial changes achieved by force and economic sanctions against an aggressor, while Chile would limit sanctions to the severance of diplomatic relations. Moreover, despite the effusive messages printed in our press about the popularity of the coming conference, most of Latin America is skeptical of any peace program sponsored by the United States. From their point of view Secretary Hull's pious words regarding the building of a new structure of peace contrast very sharply with the Navy Department's intimation, released the day after the departure of the peace delegation, that the United States is about to construct two new battleships. A "good neighbor" does not show his neighborliness with a gun.

*

THE STEEL INDUSTRY HAS RECOGNIZED AN important principle in linking its wage increase to the cost of living and stating that future changes in living costs will be accompanied by corresponding changes in pay. It will be noted, however, that the wage scale which the steel industry takes as normal is that prevailing on July 15, 1936, when real wages among steel workers were at least 15 per cent under the pre-depression level. The index of pay rolls for July, 1936, was 74.5 as against an average of 107.8 for 1929, a difference of 32 per cent. This contrasts with a decline of approximately 17 per cent in the cost of living during the same period. Meanwhile, the earnings of the steel companies have shown fantastic increases in the past year. United States Steel had a net profit of $30,000,000 in the first nine months of 1936 as against a net loss of $4,000,000 in the corresponding period of 1935. Bethlehem enjoyed earnings of $8,600,000 this year as contrasted with less than $2,000,000 in 1935. As far as wages are concerned, the steel companies believe in playing the game both ways. During the depression the industry defended a series of vicious wage cuts on the ground that it was losing money. Now that profits are beginning to roll in, it has reversed its policy and established a system of pegging wages at existing living standards. The C. I. O. is on solid ground in attacking the increase as hypocritical; it is evident that any real improvement in working-class living standards can come only through organization and an increase in labor's bargaining power.

*

THE FAILURE OF YALE UNIVERSITY TO RENEW the appointment of Professor Jerome Davis for reasons which are far from concealing the real cause—fear of his liberalism—was discussed in an earlier issue of *The Nation*. We are happy to report that the *New Republic* this week is devoting a special supplement to a thorough examination of all the facts in the case and of the charges on both sides. Everyone who cares about academic freedom should acquaint himself with this material.

*

FATHER COUGHLIN COMMITTED HARA-KIRI over a nation-wide network in a speech filled with the syrupy vowels and two-way sentences for which he is famous. While reasserting his belief that the sixteen cardinal principles of the National Union can alone save the United States from disaster or dictatorship, he announced that he was withdrawing from all radio activity in the best interests of the people. He sees a new party composed of Democrats, Socialists, Communists, progressives, and Farmer-Laborites; he looks forward to dictatorship. Will he combat these evil possibilities? "I love my country and my church too much," said Father Coughlin, turning both cheeks at once, "to become a stumbling-block to those who have failed to understand." Father Coughlin's stock in trade has been the confusion of issues; like all demagogues he battened on depression. His retirement at this time may denote a realization that prosperity dulls the appeal of panaceas. It may have something to do with the feelings of his religious superiors. It may of course be merely the gesture of a sportsman who has lost a bet. Since he is a demagogue, his speech tells nothing. But the unctuous assurance of the Silver Knight that he is retiring from public life because the forces of evil have

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won out leaves us with a sense of security similar to that created by the knight errant of San Simeon, who has just discovered publicly that Roosevelt is after all not a dictator but a Jacksonian Democrat. They have both promised to be good in public, but it would be just as well to keep an eye on them in case they start playing with matches behind the barn.

*

THE ENTHUSIASM WITH WHICH PRESIDENT Roosevelt's reelection was received by foreign governments and the foreign press was much greater than diplomatic courtesy demanded. It is evident that the nations have come to believe that a spirit of international cooperation has definitely supplanted earlier American policies of isolation or bullying interference. One and all, they interpreted the Roosevelt victory in terms of their individual interests, with some quaintly paradoxical results. France and Geneva, for example, hailed the continuance of the Democratic policy of cooperation with the League —though carried out within limits and at a safe distance—while Italy spoke with equal warmth of Mr. Roosevelt's "true neutrality," and Japan expressed satisfaction that the party responsible for the Stimson doctrine was not returned to power. Naturally the countries that have benefited by reciprocal trade agreements and new quota arrangements—particularly Canada and Cuba—were loud in their enthusiasm. Russia, too, despite its difficulties with the Roosevelt Administration, openly prefers it to a return to Republican policies. The internal significance of the Democratic sweep is generally and amusingly interpreted by each nation in its own image. Various German newspapers read into Roosevelt's great majority an indorsement of the *Führer* principle; the *Giornale d'Italia* explains that the vote indicates popular approval of "the tendency of the President to concentrate political, economic, and directive powers in a form that a European democracy would call dictatorial"; while British and particularly French commentators see in the Roosevelt triumph a magnificent vindication of democratic control and a sign that a great people can still dominate its destiny even against the opposition of the press and the powers of high finance.

*

REPUBLICAN REACTION TO THE ELECTION has revealed what disunity has been tearing at Republican ranks ever since the nominating convention. Dissatisfaction with the standard-bearer and his advisers, hinted at elsewhere, becomes explicit in the comments of Mark Sullivan and Walter Lippmann. Their thesis is that the Kansas group by trying to "out-deal the New Deal" prostituted the Republican Party in a futile effort to catch votes, whereas they should have kept the G. O. P. true to an uncompromising rugged-individualist opposition. Mr. Sullivan sourly and Mr. Lippmann solemnly conclude that the campaign strategy "compromised" the Republican position and destroyed its "moral and intellectual integrity." As for the rest of Republican reaction, it concedes on the whole that Mr. Roosevelt's victory was not due to the relief or trade-union or any class or sectional vote alone but to the country's recognition that Mr. Roosevelt represents a philosophy of government more in keeping with the realities of the times. Special mention should be made of the New York *Sun's* rancid editorial, quite devoid of the good sportsmanship shown by most Republican papers; of Mr. Hearst's bad headache on the morning after and his desperate dash for the band-wagon; and of that gem of understatement uttered by Mr. Funk of the *Literary Digest,* "Perhaps we did not reach a representative cross-section of the electorate."

*

THE RELATIVE INDEPENDENCE OF THE 1936 voter was demonstrated by two votes in the East. The New York charter and proportional representation went through with pluralities of more than 350,000 despite Tammany opposition and a generous majority for the Democratic slate. Even more impressive was the anti-Curley vote in Massachusetts, where 150,000 persons knew enough to refuse to send their Democratic Governor to the United States Senate, while supporting the reelection of their Democratic President. Unfortunately this demonstration of mass intelligence was sufficient only to beat Curley; not to elect a strong Senator. Young Henry Cabot Lodge is shifting and unstable. In the Massachusetts legislature he set himself up as a friend of the worker, but he supported labor measures and Legion measures with startling impartiality, and against him is recorded, to his permanent discredit, a vote against the repeal of the teachers' oath. Lacking a machine, however, and the other perquisites of autocratic and corrupt power, young Mr. Lodge must be welcomed as the only practical alternative to Mr. Curley.

*

ONE OF THE SADDEST OF THE CASUALTIES Spain has suffered since the beginning of the civil war is the death of Frederico Garcia Lorca, shot down last month by a rebel firing squad. At thirty-seven he was already Spain's most popular poet, his short life wholly devoted to the emergent modern Spain for which he died. Born in Andalusia he took for his themes the passion, suffering, and death characteristic of the "deep song" of the south of Spain, adding to them the sure touch of an imaginative craftsman. While his poetry was winning popularity that overflowed the boundaries of Spain and spread to Latin America, his plays were produced in Madrid (and one, "Bitter Oleander," in New York), his paintings were exhibited at Barcelona, and his transcriptions of old Spanish songs were sung everywhere. With De Falla, the composer, and Zuloaga, the painter, he organized the first fiesta of folk-songs in Granada, and as director of the government's student theater he revived for the provinces the classical drama of old Spain. To the end Garcia Lorca's abundant vitality was devoted to creating a new popular art for Spain and reviving the best art of her past. He used folklore throughout because it was the living expression of the people whose individuality he respected and whose ultimate freedom he sought to bring about.

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Roosevelt Is No Dictator

TWO questions are now uppermost in the minds of the American people. One is, What does the Roosevelt Administration contemplate in the way of a legislative program? *The Nation* is publishing in this issue the first instalment of a symposium by progressive leaders seeking to answer this question. The second question is one that lurks beneath the surface of post-election discussion: Has Roosevelt now a chance to become a dictator?

A vague fear of dictatorship is implicit in the comments of people who say that while they voted for Mr. Roosevelt they wish that the result had not been so tremendous a landslide. It is explicit in Republican editorials, which talk ominously of the power the American people have surrendered into the hands of one man. Along with the wave of rejoicing that has swept the country, there is a wave of fear, mainly unexpressed. Partly it goes back to the American tradition of distrust of governmental power; partly it is inspired by what is happening in Europe.

A fear like this is something that must be faced. Has it any basis in fact? It is true that the people have given Mr. Roosevelt an almost unlimited warrant to go ahead as he sees fit. The power of the executive is always large in the American political system. What produces the present fear is not only that the executive has now been freed from any real opposition but that the checks upon which we ordinarily depend for restraining its power seem no longer to exist. First of all, the humiliation of the Republicans weakens them as an effective opposition. Second, the new Congress is more overwhelmingly Democratic than before, and its members not only owe their election to Roosevelt's popularity but, what is more, they know they do. Third, the newspapers, which generally offer the most vociferous opposition to any Administration, have with few exceptions been so discredited because of their bitterly partisan role in the campaign that their further opposition is likely to go unheeded. Fourth, the crackpots who under the sway of Huey Long and Father Coughlin were always a source of trouble to the Administration seem now to have been at least temporarily shoved off the scene. Fifth, the small vote accorded to the radical parties weakens whatever opposition they may offer. Finally, the Supreme Court finds its prestige seriously impaired.

All this adds up to a rather impressive sum. But cold analysis reveals that we need fear no dictatorship on the part of President Roosevelt. The very fact that the main source of his strength comes from a sweeping popular vote is itself a refutation of the claim that he may exercise dictatorial power. The confidence which the people have given to him they can also take away.

Nor has the opposition really been removed. It has only changed its form. The labor and farmer groups are likely to develop a considerable organization of their own which will function effectively as an opposition. Nor should we congratulate ourselves that reactionary opposition is dead. It seemed just as dead in March, 1933, at the time of the bank panic. Yet within a short time it had revived sufficiently to swing Mr. Roosevelt's policy sharply to the right. In a capitalist state the propertied interests do not sit back submissively because they have lost an election.

But most important of all, Mr. Roosevelt lacks the temper of a dictator. He has often been accused of a strong leaning toward personal government, but he has just as often been accused of not knowing his own mind and of yielding too easily to influence. Neither charge seems to us to sum up the man. He is merely one of our stronger Presidents—of much the same fiber as Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson—with a genuine belief in democratic processes.

It is not very difficult to detect what lies behind the talk of a possible dictatorship. Some of it is undoubtedly genuine enough and arises from a misinterpretation of the Roosevelt victory, but a good part of it is drummed up. The plain meaning of the election results is that the people want the New Deal legislative program consolidated and pushed forward; but it is also clear that the Supreme Court has stood and will stand in the way of this program. The logical conclusion would be Congressional action curbing the action of the court, or—what is more likely—a constitutional amendment expressly giving Congress power which is denied it under the existing interpretation of the law.

But this is exactly what the defeated groups are trying to prevent. A *Herald Tribune* editorial, after describing how the Supreme Court and the Constitution have "held fast against the Presidential will to power during the last four years," goes on, "Here is, we submit, the line upon which those who still hold the American faith must stand and re-form their lines." Translated into less eloquent language that means that the propertied interests, defeated at the polls, are planning again to withdraw behind the earthworks of the Supreme Court as they have done ever since the days when the defeated Federalists intrenched themselves behind John Marshall. But in order to make their position the more secure they are not loath to stir up the fear of a Roosevelt dictatorship.

Brandeis at Eighty

IT IS one of the current simplifications to criticize the Supreme Court because its members are old men. Thus is a grave issue of social policy twisted out of its proper plane and reduced to triviality. The serious observer today cannot doubt that the Supreme Court majority is standing in the path of social progress. But he knows also that age has little to do with it. Justice Holmes's mind was as resilient at ninety as at fifty; Justice Story was already a conservative when he was appointed to the Supreme Court at thirty-two. November 13 of this year marks the eightieth birthday of Justice Brandeis. He is the oldest man on the present court. He is also the greatest in stature as a jurist, the ablest as a statesman and economist, the most uncompromising in his passion for social justice.

The nation has grown best acquainted with him as the leader of the liberal minority during these years of constitutional crisis. What lies behind this leadership is a record that has written itself into the history of the American progressive mind. A boyhood in the individualist

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frontier society of Kentucky and a brilliant career at Harvard and as a young lawyer in Boston—many a life has started hopefully thus only to end up in a rut. But Justice Brandeis's did not. He would never take a case without turning it about in every direction, seeking to understand it. Similarly he could not live and work in a society without seeking to uncover its foundations. And the deeper he dug the clearer became his conviction that it was the concentration of economic power that was responsible for the social blockage. It stood, a menacing giant, in the path of democratic action; it snuffed out the chances for a decent individual life.

He set himself, David-like, to fight this giant. The only weapon he had was his mind—concrete in a legal brief, swift and sure before a judge or an investigating commission, merciless with a witness—an architectural mind that laid brick on brick until the argument became a structure that could not be broken down. He mastered the intricacies of corporation finance because he saw that it was a key to the economic and therefore the social structure. From a few published figures and weeks of work he reconstructed the accounting system of the New Haven Railroad with such a deadly accuracy that the opposing attorneys thought he must have had access to the books. For twenty years, from 1896 to 1916, he fought the street-railway companies, the public utilities, the railroads, the life-insurance companies, the money trust. It was never a vindictive fight and never an aimless one. He had what Graham Wallas called "social inventiveness," and was always ready with a plan by which the railroads could be operated more efficiently or life insurance could be furnished to workers more cheaply. He took the causes that didn't pay, and became "the people's attorney." At sixty he was a public figure without having held public office—a living proof of how great a man can become if he loves justice and masters arithmetic.

This was the man whom President Wilson appointed in 1916 to the Supreme Court of the United States. For months Wall Street and its allies in the bar associations fought the appointment in the Senate committee. Here was a man whom the propertied classes could not depend on to be their servant and apologist. But the appointment went through. And in his twenty years on the bench Justice Brandeis has shown himself a legal technician of amazing skill and an unrivaled statesman in his social vision.

Today at eighty he is the biggest force standing in the way of Supreme Court reaction: he is also a symbol of how useful the court could be if its composition did not so accurately reflect the dominant economic groups. He has striven heroically, with his liberal colleagues, to interpret the Constitution as a living flexible instrument of government rather than as a shibboleth to freeze the existing economic system. He has striven to keep us out of the constitutional impasse we are now in. If he has failed, the sources of his failure must be sought elsewhere, not in him. His life is one of the high points of our American culture. We wish him, like his great colleague Holmes, another decade on the court. There is the fighting line today, and he was never one to abandon a position.

Must We Take Over the Railways?

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S action in listing "better and cheaper transportation" among the objectives which his Administration will "of course" strive for during the next four years has increased the panic of conservatives, who see government ownership of the railways as an immediate peril. For some months the Railway Business Association has been conducting a spirited campaign against what it felt to be a powerful drift toward public ownership. Writing in the *Financial World* of September 30, Harry A. Wheeler, president of this organization, declared that the "currents bearing American railroads in the direction of government ownership" could be turned back only "by a strong tide of opposing public sentiment." With a view to testing "public opinion" Mr. Wheeler conducted a poll of 633 business organizations—chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, and groups like the American Newspaper Publishers' Association—and found that with one exception they were unanimously opposed to nationalization.

Although the Roosevelt Administration has never sponsored legislation that would interfere with private ownership of the means of transportation, the Railway Business Organization professes to see a serious threat in the bills introduced by Senator Wheeler and Representatives Lundeen and Maverick. These bills are similar in character, calling for government ownership and operation of the railways through an agency to be called the United States Railways Corporation. The roads are to be acquired by exchange of securities, or by condemnation. While none of the bills were reported out of committee in the Seventy-fourth Congress, they will probably be reintroduced in much the same form in the Congress which assembles in January. The fact that they are believed to have been drafted by the legal staff of the Federal Railroad Coordinator has raised at least a suspicion that Mr. Roosevelt has been merely waiting until after the election to extend his support. Even more alarming than the ownership proposals, from the standpoint of the business diehard, is the series of "make-work" bills, which, if passed, would so add to the expense of the railways that they might actually welcome an opportunity of being taken over by the government. These include the Wheeler six-hour-day bill and measures limiting train lengths and specifying the number of men which trains of given lengths must employ. Passage of these proposals would, according to critics, increase operating expenses by an amount equal to more than 90 per cent of the railways' entire fixed charges.

The pressure for government ownership of the railways should not be taken as an indication of a growing acceptance of socialistic principles. On the contrary, the impetus comes primarily from security holders who look to the government to bail them out of serious financial difficulties. The railroads of the country may be divided into three groups, more or less equal in total mileage. In the

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first group are 17 important railways which were able, on the whole, to earn fixed charges throughout the depression. The second group contains 22 roads that failed to earn their fixed charges for from two to five years in the period between 1930 and 1935, but which might expect to come out of the red in case of a continued upturn in business. The third group consists of 21 systems the earnings of which have been far below fixed charges and which have been forced into receivership. Stock- and bond-holders of the third, and to a certain extent the second, of these groups may be found at the forefront in the agitation for government ownership.

The financial difficulties of the railways are attributable partially to the depression but primarily to the gradual encroachment of motor transport, an encroachment made possible by the relative inflexibility of railway rates. During the past fifteen years the cost of moving freight has decreased by nearly a third, but rates to the consumer have tended to rise. As a result the volume of freight moved by the roads failed to increase even during the prosperous years of 1923-29 and fell off catastrophically during the depression. Much the same has been true of passenger traffic. It is only within the past two or three years that the railroads have made any serious effort to modernize their equipment and speed up service in order to compete with motor and air transportation.

The Railway Business Association is probably correct in saying that the make-work bills would add an intolerable financial burden to the railways. On the other hand, it is obvious that the government must take some action if the American railways are to be kept running. And there is a limit to the amount of taxpayers' money that can be utilized merely to preserve the existing antiquated, overlapping system of rail transportation. Government ownership has its limitations in a capitalist economic order. But the great majority of countries in the world have found it more satisfactory than private ownership in an enterprise so closely affected by public interest. In the case of the United States, the ordinary arguments are rendered doubly effective by the conservatism of the majority of the railway executives. The prolonged fight which most of the lines waged against the two-cent fare is but an illustration of the incredible bureaucracy and lack of imagination which characterized the management of the larger systems.

It is true that public ownership may be somewhat afflicted by the same evil. But federal ownership could at least eliminate duplication of effort, and the introduction of new blood should have a salutary effect on basic policies. It should also make possible the elimination of much of the dead weight of fixed charges which now overburdens the roads. The chief danger lies not so much in the threat of political influence—the Post Office is not free of politics—as in the possibility that the government may pay far more for the railway properties than they are worth. This is precisely what happened in Canada when the government was forced to assume the obligation of the Grand Trunk system. And unless precautions are taken, government ownership may readily become not an experiment in socialism but a means of propping up one of the weakest sections in the profit system.

How Close Is Television?

TELEVISION broadcasts have already been made available to the British public. They are not similarly available in the United States, but the reason apparently is less a technical lag here than a desire on the part of American interests to be a little surer of their ground before undertaking commercial exploitation. Last week the Radio Corporation and the National Broadcasting Company gave a press demonstration of what can be accomplished at the present moment, and the results were highly interesting. Laboratory experiments had been exhibited before, but this was the first time that a sample program designed as entertainment had been demonstrated on finished receiving sets suitable for home use.

In size and general appearance the R. C. A. apparatus resembles an ordinary cabinet radio except for the fact that a screen, seven and a half by ten inches maximum size, is set in the top and viewed in an inclined mirror. Sound is, of course, transmitted separately, but the synchronization is perfect and the general effect might be best described as that of a miniature talkie, perfect so far as the sound is concerned and at least tolerably good on the visual side. In other words, the pictures, though not so clear or steady as a modern movie, are at least as good (except as to size) as the movies were twenty or twenty-five years ago. The program included two speeches, a singer at the piano, a colored "swing" trio, and the rebroadcast of several short movie films.

Those who are anticipating a new terror in our brave new world have little to fear for the immediate future. Pocket transmitting sets to be applied secretly at keyholes and such like horrors are a long way off, and it is not likely that anyone need be afraid for some time to come lest his private life be broadcast to the world without his knowledge or lest he be compelled against his will to be still further familiarized with the intimate doings of public personages. The broadcasting apparatus is still fearfully elaborate and strictly circumscribed in its field of activity. You cannot point a television "camera" at any old thing the way a modern movie camera may be pointed. Television programs must originate in a studio, and the best results are obtained when the field is about large enough to include a half-length figure.

Of more immediate interest are the questions of entertainment possibilities and commercial exploitation. Apparently the Radio Corporation officials are not themselves sure, since no announcement was made of plans in this direction, although the ten or a dozen receiving sets exhibited seemed ready for the showrooms. One can only say that while probably no one could be interested continuously in present-day television by itself, it would appear to be, even in its present state, a perfectly acceptable accompaniment to certain radio programs—particularly of speeches. There is no question that the sense of intimacy is greatly increased. The President's fireside talks, for instance, would be more real than ever if we could see him as plainly as the speakers were seen last week on the television screen.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

It Has Happened Before

Washington, November 9

IF YOU have been reading the public prints devoutly these last few days, your head is full of false notions about what happened in this country on November 3. You are under the impression that Mr. Roosevelt's victory was not only personal but also unprecedented in size and that it represented a great triumph for the forces of democracy, liberalism, and progress over the legions of fascism, greed, stupidity, and reaction. You are also under the impression that the election returns showed that the nation's wage-earners are at last beginning to wake up and feel their oats, and you have been led to believe that in the campaign just ended great strides were made toward a realignment of political forces in this country. In an attempt to exorcise such false beliefs, the following campaign catechism is offered:

Q. Was President Roosevelt's victory the greatest achieved since New Mexico and Arizona joined the Union in 1912 and brought its total to forty-eight states?

A. No. A greater popular-vote victory was scored by another champion of democracy. Warren Gamaliel Harding captured 63.8 per cent of the major-party vote in 1920. Roosevelt, according to the latest available returns, got only 61.7 per cent. Since we shall not know what the minority-party candidates polled until the next edition of the "World Almanac" is printed—and even then shall get only the votes that the Democratic and Republican election judges were magnanimous enough to count up for Browder, Thomas, Aiken, Colvin, and Lemke—it is impossible at this time to calculate Roosevelt's percentage of the total popular vote. For that matter, Harding got 60.4 per cent of the total vote, even though 1920 was the year in which the Socialists rolled up their record vote of 919,799 for Debs. The minority parties got 5.4 per cent of the vote that year; they will have done well to get 2 per cent this year. In 1924 democracy also upsurged and one Calvin Coolidge got 65.2 per cent of the major-party vote; the presence of La Follette in the race as a third-party candidate, however, brought Coolidge's percentage of the total vote down to 54.0. It might also be mentioned in passing that another great foe of the vested interests, Theodore Roosevelt, got 60 per cent of the major-party vote in 1904.

Q. Why should Roosevelt's vote be measured in terms of percentage?

A. Because that is the only sound basis of comparison. Increases in population and in the number of persons eligible to vote make measurement in terms of pluralities misleading. The latest returns give Roosevelt a plurality of 9,809,940 over Landon, and in the unlikely event that the ratio of votes is maintained by the 12,373 precincts yet to report, the total major-party vote will end at 46,330,000 and Roosevelt's plurality at 10,870,000. Mention of the plurality figure alone tends to obscure the fact that while Roosevelt was piling up a bigger popular vote than any other candidate ever polled, Landon was running up a bigger vote than any other Republican seeker of the Presidency, except Hoover, ever got. It is notable that Roosevelt's vote at the moment tops Hoover's actual total by less than 4,500,000 and that at best it will not exceed it by more than 7,200,000. It is also notable that Landon's probable total vote of 17,725,000 tops by 2,700,000 the vote given to Alfred E. Smith, who in 1928 was just as much the idol of the forces of democracy, liberalism, and progress as Roosevelt is today.

Q. Doesn't the fact that more than 40,000,000 votes were cast this year show that the citizenry reached a new high in political awareness and enthusiasm?

A. Not particularly. Between 1928 and 1936 the number of persons eligible to vote increased 10,597,000, according to the estimates of experts in calculating population trends. In 1928, 56.8 per cent of the eligibles voted. If the final returns show, as is likely, that 43,000,000 votes were cast last Tuesday, then 57 per cent of the eligibles voted this year; at 46,000,000 votes, the percentage would be 61. For that matter, the widely ballyhooed increase in registration was not remarkable. This increase, which amounted to 15.6 per cent over the 1932 figures for the country as a whole and to 22.2 per cent for the nation's ten largest cities, also dwindles in importance when measured against the increase in population. In 1932, 71 per cent of all persons eligible to vote were on the registration books; this year the percentage climbed 1.8 points to 72.8. Furthermore, the stay-at-home vote remained about normal. Between 15 and 20 per cent of the registered voters usually fail to vote. The percentage will be 16.1 this year if the total vote reaches 46,000,000. It will be 21.6 per cent if that total vote reaches only 43,000,000.

Q. Isn't it at least remarkable that Roosevelt got 61.7 per cent of the popular vote and almost the whole electoral vote in view of the powerful forces lined up against him?

A. Quite the contrary. No Democratic or Republican seeker of the Presidency ever entered a campaign with the cards so heavily stacked in his favor. He had behind him the biggest political machine the country has ever known. From the start he enjoyed a statistical edge (primary votes, registrations, and so on) in far more than half the states and in nearly three-fourths of the Congressional districts. To keep that machine running, he had at his command the biggest array of patronage any President ever

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has had. To be sure, the Democratic National Committee did not itself have as much money as the Republican National Committee, but it had more than any Democratic high command had ever had before. Furthermore, the Republican millions were as nothing compared with the New Deal's billions in WPA, PWA, CCC, HOLC, and similar expenditures, which, even if made with the utmost innocence, had the same effect as ordinary campaign expenditures. On top of all this Roosevelt had the most efficient support from organized labor any candidate has ever received. He also possessed the inestimable advantage of having arrayed publicly and indisputably against him all those persons, corporations, and organizations which from time immemorial politicians of both parties have found it profitable to disavow and revile.

Q. Hasn't the Republican Party been crushed for all time, and doesn't that mark a great advance for the forces of liberalism?

A. Yes and no. It is true that the G. O. P. has been crushed as never before, but it still retains some of its roots; the Democrats when given enough rope have always hanged themselves; and there is nothing in the returns of last Tuesday to indicate that the electorate has recovered in marked degree from its notorious fickleness. Teddy Roosevelt used to sound like Franklin Roosevelt and was as popular, and Taft was his successor. Wilson's New Freedom sounded even better than Roosevelt's New Deal, and its echo was Harding's normalcy—and Teapot Dome, Coolidge, and Hoover. As for the crushing of the G. O. P., in itself a mark of progress toward the true and the beautiful, what reason is there to believe that the party of Bilbo, Robinson, Pendergast, Pat Nash, Frank Hague, Blantin, Carter Glass, and Tammany is any substantial improvement over the party that gave us Norris, Couzens, La Follette, Cutting, and most of the other true progressives who have sat in the Senate?

Q. What myth did the election dispel and what new myth did it create?

A. It killed the *Literary Digest* myth and set up in its stead the myth of the Gallup poll's accuracy. The Gallup poll erred by nearly 15 per cent in forecasting Roosevelt's percentage of the popular vote. Worse still, it showed him on that basis less rather than more popular than he was in 1932. In addition, it erred by 50 per cent in giving Landon three states as "certain," and it fell 40 per cent short of the mark in assigning Roosevelt only 315 electoral votes as "certain." It placed fourteen states and 204 electoral votes in the column "too close for accurate" prediction, missed the vote proportions all along the line, and ended up as a prophet far below a majority of the chartless and non-scientific newspapermen who made lone tours or traveled with the candidates.

The Task for Progressives

BY MAX LERNER

THE election has swept away various myths that looked as if they would be a permanent part of the American landscape. There was the myth of newspaper prowess, the myth of campaign-fund prowess, and the myth that American voters would swallow whatever was told them with enough iteration. But most important, from the standpoint of progressive action, was the myth that labor must never mass its forces in politics. Back of that myth was, I think, the belief any underlying group has—you find it among Jews and Negroes as well—that partisan tie-ups are dangerous because they expose you as a group to the vindictiveness of the victor. Back of it was also the fear, on the part of the more conservative labor leaders, that once labor learns to act politically as a unit its next step is radical action.

The progressives have massed their forces behind President Roosevelt with an undreamed-of success. Now, on the morning after the election, they confront a difficult prospect. I spoke in my first article of the dilemma of the progressive in the election—torn as he was between the knowledge that Mr. Roosevelt was a very reluctant capitalist reformer and the certainty that under Mr. Landon the difficulty of organizing labor would be immense and the fate of American progressives would be sealed. But dilemmas have a way not of disappearing but of changing their form. The very size of the Roosevelt landslide has, from the progressive point of view, some serious drawbacks. Mr. Roosevelt is now, as never before, a colossus bestriding the American world. If he had just squeezed through the election he might have continued to need the support of the labor and progressive groups for his legislative program. He said at Madison Square Garden, "We have only just begun to fight." But with a popular majority of eleven million his new eminence places him above the battle. There is a further and very serious drawback. As long as Mr. Roosevelt had a strong and determined opposition he could afford to be militant. But the new power placed in his hands makes him vulnerable to accusations of dictatorship. And to ward off those accusations he will be tempted to lean backward and do little.

Today the progressive groups are faced with two questions. One is in the area of what may be called their foreign relations—what attitude they shall adopt toward the new Administration. The other lies in their own domestic economy—what degree of unity of ranks and coherence of program they can achieve among themselves. In France, where a bloc system operates, the progressive groups have joined the Blum government and formed a popular front. In England, where the Labor Party already has a history and where Cabinet government compels an

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opposition to write a program, the progressives are still far from clear as to their attitude toward either the government or one another. In America the progressives do not yet form an opposition party, nor are they faced with the immediate choice of joining or not joining Mr. Roosevelt's government. None the less they must in a sense at once function as an opposition—the only effective opposition the country can have.

Labor emerges from the election with increased prestige and with a new sense of its power. But in that very fact lies a danger. During the days of the NRA America had in a sense a government of national concentration: labor leaders like Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hillman, Mr. Murray joined business leaders like Clay Williams in cooperating with Mr. Roosevelt. During the campaign Labor's Non-Partisan League furnished money, speakers, energy with which to reelect Mr. Roosevelt. They had their adequate reasons, as I pointed out in my first article. But the first order of the day is to sever this connection. Labor has a task to perform of its own—the task of organizing the mass-production industries. It is a task requiring militant energies and allowing for no governmental commitments. Political alliances can only result in swerving labor from its task.

But there is another task, and it is one in which the progressive bloc in Congress, labor and farmer organizations, peace groups, and professional and middle-class groups must combine. That is to keep the new Administration firm in the direction it has thus far taken toward a liberal social-service state. This will involve a direct confronting of the Supreme Court issue. It will involve further movement in taxation, housing, and public-utility control. As for the labor groups themselves, they must, as they grow stronger, act as spearheads in the movement toward a planned economy. The cry that the reactionaries have raised against Mr. Roosevelt's "unconstitutional" legislation is a cry really directed beyond Mr. Roosevelt to a not impossible labor program. Labor will get its foretaste of what lies in store when the Labor Relations Act is invalidated: in fact, even the Social Security Act cannot be considered out of reach of the court.

I know that the temptation will be great for the progressive leaders to continue along the arc of the 1936 campaign. I know that many of them will be lured by the chance to gain concessions for the lower-income groups by working within the camp of the better of the two capitalist parties. They will argue that unless they are inside they can hope for nothing at all. But they must remember that progressive support of Mr. Roosevelt in this election was not premised on a belief that the progressives could capture the Democratic Party, or even find comfortable quarters in it. It was premised on the necessity of fighting off reaction and gaining time and an open state of civil liberties in which further organization could be pushed. The logic of such action ends with the election. To push it farther and make the alliance permanent means the destruction of independent labor action.

The problem of inner unity is far knottier. The crux of it lies in the present struggle for power being waged between the C. I. O. and the executive board of the A. F. of L. This struggle is bound to come to a head in the very near future—perhaps we shall see its climax within the year. Many peace formulas will undoubtedly be offered, and undoubtedly peace must be striven for. But the only possible peace here is one that provides for continuing the organization drive at the greatest pitch of intensity. Whichever group of leaders or combination of leaders gets the allegiance of the men who are waiting to be organized is the group which must win out in the struggle. There can be no other answer, no other peace formula—one which does not provide for it is worse than disunity.

The situation seems to me far less serious with respect to the more purely political groups. There has been considerable feeling during this campaign between the Socialists, the Communists, and the Roosevelt labor progressives—although far less than the dissensions that have torn progressive groups in past years. It was Justice Holmes who said that hard cases make bad law, and it may be true in a sense that a Presidential campaign is a bad time in which to start working for a popular front. The reactionary danger this year was great, but it was not as great as it is some day going to be. Unity is the one thing to strive for in the political field—a unity that includes in a labor party every progressive group that wants to come into it with sincerity and will subordinate itself to the decisions of the entire group.

God, we have been told, is on the side of the biggest battalions. That, whatever your beliefs, is a good maxim for political action. But where are the big battalions in American life? We had always been convinced that they were irrevocably with big enterprise. Now we are not so certain. Mr. Roosevelt has marshaled the big battalions in the teeth of reactionary opposition. Can labor and the progressives ever marshal them without the help of a Roosevelt? They can if they stay clear of further political alliances and achieve a unity of their own. If they fail they may look for themselves in the mirror that Sinclair Lewis holds up to the American future.

John L. Lewis

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What I Expect of Roosevelt

[*The Roosevelt victory has swept away many of the landmarks in American political life. In the belief that progressive thought should be clarified and brought to bear on the problems of the next four years,* The Nation *asked a group of progressives and labor leaders for their opinions on the prospect for the new Administration. Two questions were asked of them: What action do you think the new Administration ought to take? What action is it likely to take? The writers were asked to discuss either the entire program or the field of their own interests. Other statements will appear in next week's* Nation.]

NORMAN THOMAS

THE Roosevelt landslide was easy to predict; the future is less easy. There are too many contingencies in the labor situation and in domestic and foreign politics.

The campaign was encouraging by reason of the collapse of the Coughlin-Lemke semi-fascist movement and, to a degree, the proof it gave of the political solidarity of Lincoln's "common people." Nevertheless, I am rather pessimistic. Far more than the support which labor gave Roosevelt do I deplore the way in which it was given. Nothing was asked; nothing was promised. Mr. Roosevelt's campaign was intellectually on a low level. It was skilful politically, but it made no contributions to statesmanship or to intelligent democracy. The President discussed no issues looking toward the future. He goes in without definite mandate, without definite philosophy, and without proper inspiration or restraint in Congress. The next Congress will probably be in general more conservative than the last; it may have a higher percentage of crackpots put in by the efforts of Coughlinites or Townsendites, and it will be even less amenable to the right sort of leadership. I fear that it will not be able to supply that leadership from its own ranks. I do hope for something from a progressive bloc, which will, however, need to develop a more positive program and a sounder philosophy than it has yet evolved.

Under the circumstances a man with less tendency to a Messianic complex than Mr. Roosevelt would be greatly encouraged in its formation. I doubt if his plans will be definitely right or left. They will be personal; they will be shrewdly calculated in the light of their political effect. He will probably continue to give the worst reactionaries in the country a free hand in the South in return for their political support. He will probably continue a leadership in naval armament which can only have tragic consequences.

I think the imperfections and the increasing unpopularity of the Security Act may lead him to propose certain amendments. He may, especially if there is pressure from the left, really do something to push the inadequate Wagner housing bill. I have little hope of him in the field of constitutional policy because I think he has played a very undemocratic role in refusing to discuss it. His appointments to the bench have not commanded confidence, and there is still some persistence of the rumor that one of the first vacancies in the Supreme Court may be filled by Joe Robinson.

Under all these circumstances about the most we can reasonably hope for from the Administration will be a rather friendly attitude toward organized labor and a willingness to continue unemployment relief in a form which, while very unsatisfactory, is better than nothing and probably better than what Landon would have done.

The President will probably respond to pressure, but proper pressure from the left will require far more principle than was evidenced by anything done or said by labor's Non-Partisan Committee for Roosevelt. Certainly I am more than ever of the opinion that the right sort of pressure must come from those who definitely reject the profit system to which the President has again affirmed his undying allegiance. Unquestionably, however, there is a real place for a genuine farmer-labor party—and by that I do not mean a party from the beginning socialist in all but name. In such a party the Socialists, I think, will be glad to cooperate, and through cooperation will have a genuine contribution to make. The danger is that the President, with the aid, let us say, of Governor Earle of Pennsylvania as crown prince, can play a game which will make a labor party not so much a real force in its own cause as an instrument of political maneuver.

JOHN L. LEWIS

LABOR is rejoiced at the reelection of President Roosevelt, and labor is largely responsible for that reelection. Those unions which are members of Labor's Non-Partisan League have stood firmly in support of the President, and unorganized labor has followed their lead.

Labor's Non-Partisan League, which has announced its continuation as a functioning entity for political action in the future, is unquestionably responsible for much of the President's success in this campaign.

Our experience before and since 1933 has conclusively demonstrated that our financial and industrial leaders are unable of themselves to govern our economic life in the public interest.

All precedents and present-day objectives so far as industry and agriculture are concerned point to the necessity in the future for constructive action through the federal government guaranteeing economic freedom and democracy to wage and salary workers, accompanied by a high degree of economic planning and regulation for both industry and agriculture.

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By what legislative policies and measures such objectives may be attained, and how soon we may be able to establish economic democracy and a life of plenty for all groups of our people, can only be a matter of conjecture at the present time. If the Supreme Court were only responsive to popular mandates, as it should be, the happy day of America's deliverance from economic bondage would be greatly hastened.

MARY VAN KLEECK

AS ONE who supported the American Labor Party in New York State and therefore voted for Roosevelt, I believe that the trend of governmental action in the next four years will be determined not by the mind of the President but by the political and economic strength of labor, the farmers, and all other workers and producers. The issue, as in the election, relates to the forces which will control policy rather than to specific legislative proposals. The overwhelming vote of the people has been a rebuke to the efforts of big business to elect its candidates. But in industry big business continues its anti-union policy.

For labor the decisive issue has been the right to collective bargaining and the preservation of civil liberties, particularly as affecting the right to strike. These demands of labor will be challenged with renewed vigor by the anti-union forces in the highly organized corporations. The Roosevelt Administration will probably act upon the philosophy voiced in the early days of the NRA. The President will seek the "cooperation" of labor, and all agencies of government will work to prevent strikes. With rising prices and lagging wages, and with the working class burdened by the vast number of unemployed, a strike movement on a wide front is inevitable. The plea to cooperate by government officials will meet a new situation and new elements. The rank and file yielded in the early days of the NRA. The American Federation of Labor united in a program of cooperation. Now industrial unionism and its natural counterpart, a labor party, give new strength to the rank and file. Weak leadership and obvious inclinations to compromise will be repudiated sooner or later by the masses of the workers. The labor movement is entering on a new phase.

Industrial unionism and political action by labor give a new status to professional workers. The rebuke given by the vote to Hearst and the forces which have tried to curb teachers and other professional workers should set them free for more courageous discussion of issues. In increasing numbers they have been joining the labor movement. Here is a new element which will determine the political outlook. Along with the professional workers, the middle class and all the others in the group known as "the people" want security and a higher standard of living, and they begin to see that the organized forces contending for these needs are to be found in a broadened labor movement. At least they voted for a President accused of favoring labor and flirting with communism.

Roosevelt will not go left. He has declared that he is determined to save capitalism. He has probably interpreted the vote as a mandate to lead a united people to the right, though a right with a social conscience. The decisive moment will come when his Administration deals with the demands of the maritime workers, the steel workers, the miners, the automobile workers. Upon the relative strength of the forces which will then be revealed will depend whether the Social Security Act will be revamped, renewed efforts made to control monopoly, the Constitution broadly interpreted, and foreign affairs handled as a challenge to growing international fascism.

CHARLES A. BEARD

I HAVE no way of knowing whether President Roosevelt will go to the right or the left, or what specific steps he will take in various branches of administration. Nor do I feel competent to forecast the fateful events which may compel him to act in domestic and foreign affairs. What will he do in case of another European war or of another crash in business? Does he know himself? Will he and the country acquiesce in allowing fifteen or twenty million people to stagger along on doles and make-believe work? Answering such questions I leave to others more clairvoyant than I. Even what seem to be the clear trends of history may be reversed. In the election of 1852 the dominance of the slave power in American politics appeared to be firmly established, but ten years later the Proclamation of Emancipation had been announced. By appealing to myth, symbol, force, and fear, Mussolini and Hitler reversed, at least for a time, the long trends toward complete political democracy. To know is one thing; to express hopes, desires, and good-will is another.

DOROTHY DETZER

THE most vital problem facing the country in its next four years is keeping out of war. Our participation in another war would mean military fascism in this country. It would mean complete loss of the slight progress toward social security we have made. The industrial-mobilization plan of the United States War Department shows that this is not an alarmist point of view. This plan would come into operation the day we declared war. It would suspend child-labor laws, protection of women in industry, collective-bargaining rights, and all other safeguards to labor. A government board under the chairmanship of an "industrial leader" would devise "measures to prevent grievances of employees, whether actual or imaginary, from interfering with war production." The risk of having such a fascist system fastened on this country is the gravest risk we run today.

The Roosevelt Administration has not faced this issue squarely, but it has made some advances and many promises toward keeping us out of war. The reciprocal tariff policy, by removing bars to international trade, has done much to build international good-will. The Democratic platform has pledged its continuance. The neutrality law embargoing munitions and credits to belligerents is a step forward, but it does not embargo basic raw materials. An inter-American neutrality treaty will probably be proposed by the United States at the Buenos Aires peace conference.

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Such a treaty is highly desirable, but unless it includes embargos on shipments of basic raw materials it cannot be an effective peace instrument. If the President is in earnest in his hatred of war he will throw all his power into support of real neutrality for the Western Hemisphere.

Nationalization of the munitions industry and taking the profits out of war, both urged by the Nye committee, are peace measures which should pass the next Congress. The President has eloquently attacked war profits; consistency will require him to push legislation against them.

A Nye committee resolution providing for a national referendum at the elections of 1938 as a "limitation of the powers of Congress to determine whether ever again there shall be a military draft of men for service outside continental United States" should also have Administration support. The President has proposed that we define an aggressor as he who sends armed forces across his borders. He has implied, therefore, that our army and navy are to defend our own shores. The referendum resolution would enable the American public to express their views.

The Democratic platform of 1932 called for "a navy and army adequate for national defense, based on a survey of all facts affecting the existing establishments that the people in time of peace may not be burdened by an expenditure fast approaching $1,000,000,000 annually." No such survey has ever been made, and armament appropriations now exceed one billion dollars. The Benson bill "to establish a policy of national defense" provides for study of our defense needs by a civilian commission. This should have Administration backing because it is basic to the determination of our armament expenditures.

ALVIN JOHNSON

NO other American ever received so overwhelming a vote of confidence as President Roosevelt received on November 3. Has he not then a mandate to proceed with whatever program he has in mind? President Roosevelt set no specific program before the voter, except to maintain and consolidate the positions he had already established. The Republicans proposed to dismantle social security, the WPA, the AAA, the tax on undistributed profits, the Hull reciprocity agreements. The voters rejected this proposal. We want to keep what we have, but we are not asking for more. Prosperity is upon us and we hope that we may enjoy it in peace. It is reasonable to infer that this is also Roosevelt's attitude. Not business alone but Roosevelt himself needs a breathing spell.

It is doubtful that the breathing spell will be of long duration. Organized labor, which may rightfully claim a large share of the credit for Roosevelt's huge majorities, does not want a breathing spell. It means to proceed militantly with the organization of the mass-production industries. It recognizes that it will meet fierce resistance from employers who are now beginning to feel their oats—profits. There will be trouble, and labor will expect from Roosevelt and the Democratic Party something better than Spanish neutrality.

What can Roosevelt do for labor engaged in a fierce struggle with the employers, backed by local and state governments? Under the Constitution, very little. Will he then be prepared to insist upon the submission by Congress to the people of an amendment permitting effective federal intervention in the industrial struggle? The Democrats have the necessary two-thirds' majority in both Houses. With their labor and farmer-labor allies they could control three-fourths of the state legislatures. If the President demands such an amendment, and his party supports him, it can go through in record time.

But experience shows that a party which commands an overwhelming majority is not easily subjected to discipline. What keeps a party from developing factional differences is a dangerous enemy; and for the next two years the Republicans will not be dangerous. If Roosevelt tries to move forward into the field of the industrial struggle he will necessarily produce a cleavage between the old Southern wing of the party and the new labor wing. If he sidesteps the issue, labor will turn against him.

President Roosevelt's talent for political combination is indeed brilliant. But it is exceedingly doubtful that even he will be able to bring the party intact through the stresses of the next four years.

MARY K. SIMKHOVITCH

THE President has pledged the Administration to a program of slum clearance and rebuilding for the low-income groups. There is no use regretting that this program was not one of the earliest efforts for recovery.

It was doubtless too much to expect that public housing could be secured in this country without a period of education. Business enterprise, and especially the real-estate groups, looked askance at what at first seemed to be a program in competition with and hostile to its own interests. But now that these groups themselves have recognized their inability to build with profit for families unable to pay commercial rents, the problem of public housing ought to have an easier path to follow.

Subsidy is the major necessity for public housing. To what extent and in what forms may still be profitably studied. A low interest rate is a major essential. But this will have to be accompanied by government grants—federal, state, and local. Construction should be of the simplest sort consistent with proper standards. Land values, community planning, and financing present many difficulties to be solved. But by and large the Wagner bill offered a sound base for legislation. It is expected that Senator Wagner will take up this legislation again.

A building shortage is already here. The policy to date has been to allow the low-income dwellers to occupy houses unfit for habitation and abandoned by those who can afford a minimum standard of decency. For workers of a higher economic level limited-dividend housing or cooperative housing is the answer. For workers in the lower-income groups only subsidized public housing can create houses fit for occupancy.

Public housing is the neglected feature in a national health and welfare program, but it is not too much to hope that with the President's support it will become an accomplished national policy within the next four years.

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Labor Showdown at Tampa

BY MARGARET MARSHALL

Washington, D. C.

IT IS the fate of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor that the Committee for Industrial Organization will steal all the headlines at the forthcoming convention in Tampa, whether its ten unions be readmitted, continued in suspension, or thrown out.

The plight of the executive council in relation to the C. I. O. is a replica in small of the plight of the craft-union bloc in relation to American labor as a whole; moreover, at Tampa, the industrial-union advocates will work under a difficulty which does not apply to the general situation. Green and his craft-union friends may still command a majority for the simple reason that organized labor comprises only a small percentage of labor; in the country at large Lewis and his colleagues command the allegiance of that overwhelming majority of labor which has never been organized. The Tampa convention, and the maneuvering which is sure to precede and accompany it, must be judged in the light of these larger considerations.

The fight within the federation has been personalized in the figures of John L. Lewis and William L. Hutcheson, who came to blows at the last convention. Their hatred of each other is not entirely unrelated to the fact that at one time their day-by-day ideas and policies were very similar. Both have been dictators in the most extreme sense. But where Hutcheson, the carpenter, has remained as stiff and dry and narrow as a two-by-four, Lewis, the miner, has shown imagination and a great capacity for flexibility and growth. Both like power; but Hutcheson sees power in terms of a tight organization, not so large as to get out of control, business-like, ruthless, regularly collecting dues, impervious to troublesome new ideas. Lewis sees and wants power in terms of national position and control over the minds as well as the dues of a vast labor movement. By espousing industrial unionism so wholeheartedly he has committed himself to a measure of democratic rank-and-file rule which he never risked in building up the United Mine Workers. Lewis was once a Republican. His political shift represents a move which may be described loosely as to the left, but which is more accurately described as a move toward the center of popular will.

It has been disclosed that it was Hutcheson who brought about the actual suspension of the C. I. O. unions by threatening to withdraw the carpenters' union from the federation. Since he heads the largest union in the federation, next to the miners, this threat meant that Lewis would have gained complete control of the A. F. of L. The status quo was safer with Hutcheson. Then arose an issue on which the executive council could not accept the domination of Hutcheson even though he might be able to protect them from the tides of industrial unionism. Hutcheson is a diehard Republican. He was chairman of the labor committee of the Republican Party. Among other things, he issued pamphlets denouncing "John L. Lewis and his C. I. O. with its radical Brophys, Hillmans, and Dubinskys who are pleading for labor to vote for President Roosevelt so communism can overthrow the American form of government." The executive council, which believes in more rather than less government regulation of economic life, could not be neutral. Hutcheson could not stomach even its mild indorsement of Roosevelt and resigned.

The election of Roosevelt further weakens Hutcheson's position, just as it increases Lewis's prestige. The Democratic strategy by which Labor's Non-Partisan League was made an adjunct of the Democratic National Committee injures the chances of a labor party in 1940. It does not alter the fact that Lewis will be in a stronger position than any other labor leader to influence legislation. That position would be stronger if the Roosevelt landslide had been less sweeping—if the carrying of Pennsylvania, for instance, could be set down without reservation to Labor's Non-Partisan League. It will get stronger only if the C. I. O. completes the job of organizing labor, thereby maintaining pressure in Washington.

These political developments make less desirable or likely the expulsion of the Lewis group from the official labor movement. Aside from the fact that craft unions have no inherent basis for unified action, there are groups in the federation which are dependent for their gains not so much on ordinary trade-union tactics as on legislation. These groups include the railway unions, the metal trades, which are heavily represented in the railroads and also in the navy yards and arsenals, and the civil-service unions. In general it may be said that the members of the executive council are divided in their loyalties by bread-and-butter considerations. At the same time political factors alone should serve to increase unity in the C. I. O.

There are straws in the wind to show that the executive council is finding the voice of Hutcheson far less persuasive. Since his resignation the council has failed to extend the suspension order to two unions which have given their unreserved support to the C. I. O., namely, the International Typographical Union, whose president, Charles P. Howard, is secretary of the C. I. O., and the United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers, headed by Max Zaritsky, whose name also appears on the C. I. O. roster. The executive council prefers to believe that these two unions are not affiliated with the C. I. O. This means that the C. I. O. will have friends at court in the delegates of these two unions. Likewise the Brewery Workers, the Bakers, and the Pressmen may be counted upon to vote against suspension. They will be joined by delegates from the many central labor bodies and state federations that have either condemned the suspension of the ten C. I. O. unions or remained neutral—which often meant tacit dis-

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approval. These bodies have only one delegate each but they will help to destroy the diehard morale. The fact that the dynamic of the executive council is inertia makes any positive dissent all the more telling.

It seems doubtful that the Tampa convention, assuming that the suspension is not lifted, will revoke the charters of the C. I. O. unions. That would require a two-thirds' majority. The convention, more probably, will find a way of putting off the decision for another period, which will, among other things, enable the C. I. O. to strengthen its prestige enormously by a whirlwind drive in steel, rubber, and automobiles. It is possible of course that the A. F. of L. may find a way of lifting the suspension without losing too much face, but in that case it will also have to find a way of turning over the organization of mass-production industries to the industrial unionists. The C. I. O. in Pittsburgh has already made it clear that it will not accept reinstatement only to have industrial unionism beaten again at Tampa—as it could be by a simple majority.

Meanwhile industrial unionism has raised its head in Hutcheson's own bailiwick. In the time-honored A. F. of L. manner, jurisdiction over the Federation of Woodworking Industries, comprising some 72,000 members, was handed to the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, which had contributed not at all to its organization but was willing to accept its dues. Now Hutcheson the carpenter has discovered that one of his juiciest oysters is tainted. At the convention of the woodworkers in September, the delegates presented their chief with a sheaf of resolutions which cursed him up one side and down the other, indorsed industrial unionism and condemned the suspension of the C. I. O. unions, denounced Hutcheson for supporting Landon and came out for Roosevelt, and demanded that the whole question of industrial versus craft unionism be submitted to a referendum of the rank and file of all unions. Unfortunately the woodworkers are as yet "non-beneficial" members of the carpenters' union. They are allowed to pay dues but their delegates have no vote at the union's convention in December. They intend, however, to raise their voices.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD

The parlor floor of the American Federation of Labor building in Washington is dedicated to the memory of Samuel Gompers; and his spirit lingers on every other floor. Even the elevator, in its measured ascent, bespeaks his era. The office of William Roberts, legislative counsel for the A. F. of L., is cluttered, but it is not the clutter of a modern busy establishment. It is the accumulation of a small-town lawyer's office which has been gathering inertia and cigar smoke for a generation. And Mr. Roberts? He is the salt of the earth, an average man, a good union man, who worked on newspapers in Chicago and now works for labor on Capitol Hill. He was cordial even after he heard I was from *The Nation*. He lectured me in fatherly fashion for *The Nation*'s "lies" about the A. F. of L. What could we possibly know about the trade-union movement, sitting in an office in New York?

I assured him that we were only anxious to see the building of a strong labor movement and bore no ill-will against the executive council. I went on to suggest that the issue now dividing the labor movement could best be settled by a referendum of the rank and file. Mr. Roberts then introduced his second theme.

"What Communist," he asked, "told you to say that?"

Disavowing Moscow, I admitted that I had come across the suggestion in an account of the proceedings of the convention of the Federation of Woodworking Industries. Mr. Roberts reverted to his first theme. "Those people," he said, "don't know anything about trade unionism."

He went on to elaborate his objection to a referendum. If you did that, he said, you'd have people going around the country getting locals to vote one way or the other. And that, said Mr. Roberts in shocked tones, is politics. The A. F. of L. has nothing to do with politics. "Why it's not even mentioned in the meetings of the executive council." He assured me that Hutcheson's resignation from the executive council had nothing to do with politics. (He also assured me, however, that Communists are not allowed in the A. F. of L.) His grievance against Lewis is that Lewis wants a big strong political party so he can be President in 1940. "And he's willing to destroy the American labor movement to do it," said Mr. Roberts in a flash of indignation and trade-union loyalty.

Mr. Roberts was anxious to disabuse my mind of the idea that industrial unionism is the issue in the present controversy. The issue, he declared, is majority versus minority rule. . . . He chuckled over the New York stories in the *Times* which had been playing up dissension in the ranks of the C. I. O. . . . When I told him that I, like himself, was a member of the A. F. of L., he referred briefly to the Newspaper Guild strike in Seattle. That strike, he said, was ill-advised. It just went to show what happens when a union hasn't had experience. Instead of waiting for the National Labor Relations Board to decide the case, the guild called a strike. He made it clear that he regards strikes with distaste. "That's why," he said in summing up, "a union must be affiliated a year before it can get strike benefits." He did not say, but he meant, that those people don't know anything about trade unionism.

After that Mr. Roberts grew mellow. When I repeated that *The Nation* wanted to see more labor in the labor movement he told me about trade unionism. If you got too many people in the unions, said Mr. Roberts almost confidentially, there'd be a lot of trouble. "Did you ever read 'The Ancient Lowly'?" he asked. I hadn't. He told me about it. He reflected that there had been a wonderful improvement in working conditions since then. Mr. Roberts takes the long view—backwards. Then he got to his real point. "Look at Spartacus," he said, "Spartacus got too strong and they crushed him. That's what happens when labor gets too strong. It gets crushed by its enemies."

Mr. Roberts is right, in a way. The issue *is* majority against minority rule; the hitch is that the ranks of labor extend far beyond the present limits of the American Federation of Labor. Taking the long view—forward—it is this larger group which will eventually decide how strong labor dares to be. But I wouldn't think of bothering Mr. Roberts, or the memory of Samuel Gompers, with such a "communistic" idea.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The Great Extermination

NEVER before was an American election so far-reaching as the one just concluded. Never before were there so many political pests eradicated by one volley and so many others riddled with buckshot. Not only were Landon, Knox, and Hamilton retired to private life, where they belong so obviously, but Curley of Massachusetts, "Big Bill" Thompson of Illinois, Townsend of California, Father Coughlin of Detroit, and Gerald Smith of Louisiana were definitely put out of the running—though doubtless we shall continue to hear from Father Coughlin. The unspeakable William Randolph Hearst received the worst drubbing of his career—only promptly to discover that after all Franklin Roosevelt is perhaps just such a Democrat as Andrew Jackson! Senator Dickinson, one of the most reactionary men in the Senate, was defeated in Iowa—he, the "gallant keynoter" of the Cleveland convention. Senator Hastings of Delaware, who was the darling of the Liberty Leaguers because of his constant attacks on every phase of the New Deal, will remain at home. The Liberty League itself was crushed, and the pitiful figure of Alfred E. Smith is now definitely relegated to the sidelines; his political career is at an end and deservedly so. It was the most magnificent house-cleaning.

It will be a long time before we shall again see such a brazen effort to frighten and dragoon the American workingman to vote against his own interests. It will be a long time before the possessors of great wealth and special privilege will undertake again to besmear a President whose boots they licked at the beginning of his administration when they were imploring him to save them. For they will not soon forget what happened in 1936, when these tactics of theirs helped to roll up what will doubtless long remain the greatest Presidential plurality in our history. It will be a long time before the donors of the huge Republican campaign fund forget just how useless that expenditure was and how utterly mistaken they were in thinking that they could elect a nobody in opposition to Franklin Roosevelt. It will be a long time before we get a clearer demonstration of how completely the American daily press in the North and West has lost touch with its readers and fails to represent their views. Never was the political prestige of daily journalism so low. At least 75, if not 80, per cent of the most powerful newspapers in the North campaigned against the President—and also helped to roll up the greatest plurality in history. We have seen the pitiful spectacle of great Democratic newspapers either withholding their support or going over to the enemy, the saddest of these being the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, only three years ago the foremost liberal daily in the Middle West, if not in the entire United States. There could not be better proof of the fact that as newspapers or their owners become richer and richer, or require more and more capital, their managers more and more take their places among the reactionaries of the land. The press is not the least of the proper victims of Election Day.

That we shall now see a reorientation in our political life admits of no question. Even if there should not arise in the next four years a strong farmer-labor party to include within its ranks what remains of the Socialists, together with the progressives, the farmer-labor organizations of the West, and the new American Labor Party of the East, the Republican Party, if it is to survive, must either become as liberal as the Democracy of Roosevelt or a completely reactionary nucleus around which the conservatives of both the old parties may group themselves.

If the Republican Party is not dead, it is near dissolution. For it is utterly leaderless as well as without a program. What is left of all that talk last summer that a new group of able and progressive men from the Middle West had seized hold of the Republican Party to give it new life and new vigor and to bring it into step with the progressive elements of the Middle West? The two ex-Bull Moosers, Landon and Knox, proved the willing mouthpieces of the old reactionaries. Mr. Hamilton showed himself not only entirely unscrupulous in his attacks upon his opponents but destitute of vision, of all constructive statesmanship, and even of managerial ability. The successors of these failures are not in sight, and, what is more, there is very little chance of any leadership being developed in the next four years. For there are only seven Republican governors left, and only seventeen Republicans, conservative and progressive, will sit in a humiliatingly small group in the Senate, with Vandenberg of Michigan as the foremost figure among the old-line representatives, now actually numbering only *twelve,* incredible as it seems. The mortality in the House has been equally amazing. Think of Missouri with a solid Democratic delegation, Pennsylvania with only six Republican Congressmen out of thirty-four, New York with only sixteen out of forty-five, Illinois with only six out of twenty-seven, and Wisconsin without one!

Even this only tells half the story. Franklin Roosevelt has more nearly accomplished what Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson set out to do—break the power of "the masters of America, the great capitalists," as Mr. Wilson put it—than anybody could have deemed possible. How will he accept his great victory? That becomes the one great question. Will he sink back and try to establish an "era of good-will," or will he strike boldly toward the reorganization of our economic and social life and the further reorientation of the government to industry and labor?

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BROUN'S PAGE

The President Needs a Gadfly

ON numerous occasions during the recent campaign Republican orators asserted that President Roosevelt was being advised by Communists, but when the specific Communist was named he turned out to be Felix Frankfurter, Herbert Bayard Swope, Roy Howard, or Henry Wallace. In the sober judgment of after election I think we can admit that not one of these estimable gentlemen quite fits the definition. And yet it seems to me that now it might be an excellent idea for Mr. Roosevelt to make good that charge. He ought to have somewhere close to him a devil's advocate.

The danger of his huge majority has been mentioned by both friendly and unfriendly critics. It is not a good thing for any American executive to proceed without some severe critic at his elbow. In theory this corrective force should be furnished by the American press. But the newspapers of America took an even greater licking than Governor Landon. Why should the President seek counsel from a source which was so obviously out of touch with public opinion? Somewhere between 80 per cent and 85 per cent of our national press opposed the President in his campaign for reelection. Practically all this criticism came from the right rather than the left. For instance, the *Daily Worker* was far more friendly than the New York *Herald Tribune* or the Chicago *Tribune*.

I am not maintaining for a moment that Roosevelt's mandate is a command to him to introduce immediately either socialism or communism in the United States. On the other hand, I can see no interpretation of the returns which does not suggest that the people of America want the President to proceed along progressive or liberal lines. Unfortunately both of these words are extremely difficult of definition. After all, Governor Landon called himself "a practical progressive," and that great liberal Amos Pinchot was one of the strongest supporters of the candidate from Kansas. In suggesting that Mr. Roosevelt draw into his counsels a true left-winger I am not urging that he necessarily follow the advice of such an associate 100 per cent or even 10 per cent of the time, but I do think that Mr. Roosevelt ought to keep in mind the criticism of those who feel that he does not go far enough or rapidly enough.

I am not denying the rights of the conservative minority. In spite of the landslide the voters were not saying that all conservative ideas should immediately be liquidated. However, the conservatives, in spite of the fearful defeat at the polls, still control many avenues of expression. Colonel McCormick may not have won his point in arguing for a reactionary economic program but he is still articulate. With a few exceptions, such as that of the New York *Sun*, most of the opposition papers took their licking gracefully and suggested that perhaps we were due to move into a Monroe period of complete agreement and amity. Even William Randolph Hearst, who felt during the campaign that Roosevelt closely resembled Stalin, is now somewhat convinced that perhaps he looks a little more like Andrew Jackson.

By now we should all be convinced that the final decisions of Franklin Delano Roosevelt on any subject are wholly his own. We have lived through the era in which he was supposed to be run completely by Raymond Moley. Mr. Moley seems to have moved away and the President continues to function. Then there was the strange fiction that Rexford Guy Tugwell really wrote the Administration measures and tossed them over to President Roosevelt for the mere conventionality of executive approval. Mr. Tugwell was not at all in the limelight during the campaign and it is rumored that he may resign because, in spite of loyalty, the role of whipping boy has become too onerous. Again while Louis Howe lived many newspaper commentators felt that he was the supreme political strategist and that in all questions of campaign policy the President took his word without question. But Mr. Howe died and Roosevelt moved on to his greatest triumph.

Of the political acumen of Jim Farley there can be no doubt whatsoever, and I assume that a vast amount of detail was left in his hands during the recent campaign. Nevertheless, anybody who saw the President at all during that drive must have realized that the entire major strategy was in the hands of the candidate.

It may seem disloyal on my part but I think that the chief objection to the set-up of Roosevelt's councils is that it includes too great a number of newspapermen. Nobody can serve very long in a journalistic capacity without getting an exaggerated idea of the power of the press. Though I have on numerous occasions expressed the opinion that the influence of the newspapers is waning, I am still held to a hope and the belief that they may presently reach their former stature. If a man's salary check is dependent upon the success of some portion of the daily press, he does not like to admit that maybe radio is a medium which puts his activities into a wholly secondary position. It seems to me that labor has a right to say, in spite of the landslide, that it contributed vastly to the success of Roosevelt. It is a startling thing that Pennsylvania should have gone Democratic by a huge vote even though state after state was running to get on board the band-wagon.

John L. Lewis moves ahead with increased power and prestige. Mr. Lewis has a right to exert pressure upon the President to move for certain measures, but it would be a great mistake at the present time for John L. Lewis to devote all his energies to the political front. His first job is that of organization. And so I come back to my point of a devil's advocate for the President's inner circle. Incidentally I did not mean to suggest that Lewis was red or even slightly pink around the edges. Franklin Delano Roosevelt needs a resident gadfly. HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NOGUCHI"

BY DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

FRANKLY, canaries have never interested me. I remember longing passionately for a gilded tenor at the age of six, but with maturity and a maturing preoccupation with native American wild birds, canaries in my thoughts recurred less and less often; I was willing to praise them, but unwilling to learn anything more about them. They assumed at last the position that people's pet begonias occupy in my esteem for flowers.

Dr. Eckstein, professor of physiology in the University of Cincinnati, author of "Noguchi," dissolved my prejudices more rapidly than I had supposed anyone could do. He accomplished his feat in about ten short pages—no, fifty, to be exact; it was at the end of the first ten pages that I became so thoroughly captivated by Dr. Eckstein himself that I would have read on if his pets had been scorpions and centipedes. Dr. Eckstein is the man I have been looking for—the scientist who keeps a Steinway in his chemical laboratory, who knows languages, appreciates alien cultures, like the pre-Occidental period of Japan, can speak the name of God without embarrassment but does not think, with some astronomers and physicists, that God is chiefly an astro-physicist on the grand scale. I had a friend at college, also a German by descent, who was a brilliant chemist and played Chopin by the hour to an astounded Harvard Yard. Since I lost track of this boy I have gone about bewailing the small-business-man mentality of the average American scientist, a sober fellow, conscientious and fundamentally uninteresting, remote from life, or sometimes (in the fields of education and sociology and economics) boisterous, faddy, cocksure.

I don't honestly know the reputation of Dr. Eckstein in physiology, since I know nothing of its recent progress. I assume it is high. Even if it weren't, this man would be a citizen of the world precious to the world. Anyway, I am not reviewing his scientific work but only this book,* offered not upon the tables of animal behavior but to literature, and in particular the literature of nature.

Dr. Eckstein has a style, and a style entirely his own. It may remind you at moments of the style of *Time,* but I really mean to praise it more highly than that comparison would suggest. The style will remind you still more of a man talking—of a literal, shorthand account of an extempore speech. From this it derives its naturalness, its fresh directness. It is as nearly naked of adjectives as a style with any public decency could be. He omits the connectives, leans upon the elided grammar of colloquial utterance, and finds that it holds him up, conveys his meaning. By virtue of this stripped yet loose construction the author keeps his subject—canaries—before you every instant.

And now for canaries. Dr. Eckstein shows himself the scientist he is in his approach to his hobby of canary raising, into which he stumbled accidentally and more or less unwillingly, for he treats his birds—I really don't know how many he had altogether or at any one time, but it was enough to make his observations have some universality of meaning—as the individuals they undoubtedly are. Presumably every animal in the world, down to a paramoecium, is an individual, but individuality only reaches the horizon of our poor human vision when the animal is high enough in the scale to have intelligence. And by intelligence Dr. Eckstein seems to imply the ability to learn from experience (excluded from definitions of pure and simple instinct, as of reflex and tropism). Intelligence among canaries implies also the capacity to make a choice, educable associative memory, and some forethought.

Individuality among canaries in Dr. Eckstein's laboratory meant more than his ability to tell the birds apart by their appearance, to know their voices in the dark. It meant very different behavior amid identical environments and events. It meant that among themselves the birds had distinct aversions as well as attachments—not all of them sexual. Every animal lover has tales, incredible to his listeners, to tell of the indelible personalities in a litter of pups that to us look all alike. But animal lovers are not scientists, not even unprejudiced reporters. Darwin got into hot water because he uncritically accepted reports from Tom, Dick, and Harry in the matter of animal behavior. I am inclined, however, to trust Dr. Eckstein on his reports of the way that one canary with a vulgar voice corrupted the tone of the community, of the shifting pattern of the sexual liaisons, of the interest taken in injured members of the community by the rest, of the traits of youth, adolescence, maturity, and senescence so similar to, or at any rate parallel with, our own age changes.

How much has the behavior of birds to do with human behavior? This is a question often whipped out by the theorists of human society. Science is not ready with a pat answer. It objects to being quoted, to having its findings transposed into some other terms. Science would remind you first that most people, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the author of the latest book on the Russian experiment, are all too likely to confuse human behavior with human nature. Canary behavior and canary nature are also not identical. Dr. Eckstein, I'm afraid, assumes that everyone knows this. So there is danger that someone will moralize from his beautiful little monograph. I hope that, instead, it will be read as the literature of a very fresh surface of experience with nature.

*"Canary: The History of a Family." By Gustave Eckstein. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

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Woodpile

By MARK VAN DOREN

The high heap that now and then,
When the wind thumps it, settles—
The breathing space decreases for the grass
Beneath it, and the nettles—
Will lie, when April thrashes,
Compacted ashes.

Not here, not like this mountain, tossed
From the saw's teeth all fall;
Not here, but humbly leeward of the house,
And ghostly small—
Nothing, after this winter,
Of sap or splinter.

There will be nothing of the difference,
When grass grows again—
Nothing between the big and little mountains
Save two unfrozen men:
The blood in them still running,
Lukewarm and cunning.

For such as them this pyramid
Must pass, becoming flame—
All but a little powder on the ground there
That no lit match could tame;
Lest their poor lives be finished,
Bulk is diminished—

Shrinking until a room expands
To summer under the snow;
Melting away though earth is solid iron,
And ice-flakes blow.
Perhaps itself should stay.
Yet who can say?

BOOKS

Flaying the Generals

THE WAR IN OUTLINE. 1914-1918. By Liddell Hart. Random House. $2.

CAPTAIN HART'S latest volume will add additional luster to his already great reputation as a military critic. If it is a condensation of his "History of the World War," he has created it with a masterly hand. His style is brilliant, and the whole narrative is fascinating even to one familiar with the whole dreadful story. Indeed, the sweep of the presentation may well be the envy of novelists. The "blurb" on the cover is correct in stating that Captain Hart has told the whole story "without the slightest sacrifice to accuracy and clarity." It is really astounding that he has been able to cover the whole panorama of the conflict so completely in so short a space and yet to discuss fully some of the most important mysteries of the war, such as the reasons for the loss of the Battle of the Marne and the disaster at Gallipoli, and the German failures to utilize their frequently tremendous successes. His summary of the Battle of Jutland is masterly in its compactness. More than that, he is entirely detached in his judgments, being influenced least of all by the fact that he himself wore the British uniform and is an Englishman. This book ought to become an invaluable reference volume, for it contains all that the average person need know about the struggle. It is impossible to see how it can be improved upon in the years to come—even if we should profit by future confessions of statesmen and military autobiographers.

But what a story it is! Never was the incompetence of military leaders set forth in so devastating a manner. Out of their own mouths he convicts them, reprinting here their own utterly absurd prophecies as well as chronicling their stupidities and their blunders, which often cost in a day from 50,000 to 100,000 lives. If there are those who think that the history of the Army of the Potomac for its first two years is a heart-rending account of the butchery of gallant men because of totally incompetent leadership, this story is a thousand times worse. One after the other Captain Hart strips the generals naked. He shows them no mercy, Joffre, Foch, Nivelle, Haig, Henry Wilson, Sir John French, Kitchener—even Pershing comes in for some raps. Petain and Lettow-Vorbeck alone escape. Hindenburg, Ludendorff, Moltke, Falkenhayn, as well as the Russians, come in for their share of the guilt; on the German side he leans to the school that is giving more and more credit and praise to General Hoffmann as the real brains of the German eastern offensive. Captain Hart never fails to remind the reader that these shortcomings and failures were inevitably paid for by the lives of thousands upon thousands of Englishmen, Australians, Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, Portuguese, and even Americans.

How anyone can believe in military leaders after reading this soldier's story of the greatest of wars is beyond me. Their lack of vision, their lack of knowledge of anything but the details of a military art which proved to be completely outmoded the minute the "war of position" began, the way they were themselves victims of the military machines they had created, all are clearly set forth here. And Captain Hart, moreover, most effectively shows up the weaknesses of the modern war of masses. He shows how defense triumphed over attack, "the kind of attack on which, before the war, all the general staffs had counted confidently for success." He brings out how the "brass hats" opposed the machine-gun, which became the great weapon of the war, opposed the tank, opposed every new device, and even when they got the new weapons spoiled their effect by failure to use them properly. What could illustrate the military mind more clearly than this quotation from Sir Henry Wilson in mid-September, 1914? "Kitchener's ridiculous and preposterous army is the laughing-stock of every soldier in Europe. . . . Under no circumstances could these mobs take the field for two years. Then what is the use of them?" Could anything have been more terrible than the autumn offensive of 1915 when the British and French lost 240,000 men and the Germans 140,000 in attacks which, as the "Official British History" admits, "had not improved the general situation in any way and had brought nothing but useless slaughter of infantry"? It is no wonder that a number of French divisions finally mutinied against this war of attrition.

The worst of all the blunders, as Lloyd George has recently pointed out, was Haig's Passchendaele offensive, in which 400,000 men were sacrificed, thousands upon thousands being

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drowned in mud and water in a flooded and water-logged country. So for years on the Western front, as Captain Hart says, "the formula of victory became merely a formula of futility—and death. The more ranks of attackers, the more swathes of dead: that was all." Is it any wonder that he adds, "But there is over 2,000 years of experience to tell us that the only thing harder than getting a new idea into the military mind is to get an old one out." No pacifist ever wrote such an overwhelming and unanswerable indictment of the whole war system as has Captain Hart. OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Behind Spoon River

ACROSS SPOON RIVER. By Edgar Lee Masters. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.50.

THERE was no actual village of Spoon River, nothing but a muddy creek "winding its way through flatlands, amid hills that only distance lifts into any beauty, through jungles of weeds and thickets and melancholy cottonwoods." The imagined village of the book was made up from memories of Petersburg and Lewistown, where Edgar Lee Masters spent his youth. Some of the characters are close to life. Lucinda and Davis Matlock are Lucinda and Davis Masters, the poet's grandparents. The death at five of a brother, Alec, colors the tragedy of Hamlet Micure. Webster Ford—recalling the Elizabethans—is Masters himself, under the pseudonym which he used when the epitaphs first appeared in Reedy's *Mirror* in St. Louis between May, 1914, and January, 1915. His autobiography identifies many of his characters with their originals, though he named some of them "by combining names I found in lists of the signers of the constitution of Illinois." In 1906 he planned to make his book a novel, he told his father, showing that human beings are the same in villages and in cities. But in May, 1914, after a visit with his mother during which they talked about Petersburg and Lewistown, Masters suddenly wrote The Hill, the opening poem of the later volume, and two or three of the epitaphs. "Why not make this the book I had thought about in 1906, in which I should draw the macrocosm by portraying the microcosm?" Overworked by his legal practice, he was so possessed by a continual poetic excitement that he could write in any chance moment of leisure, and he finished and published his book within a year. But the strain wore him out, he nearly died of pneumonia, and he was delirious when his proofs reached him.

"Above everything poetry has been the passion of my life to which philosophy and science and history have been but handmaidens." " 'Tis vain, O youth, to fly the call of Apollo," says Webster Ford in his epitaph, and Masters speaks in his own person of "my brother the god" who brought him fortune. Perhaps it is always hard to distinguish between flight and pursuit in the life of a poet. Did Masters hunt after Apollo, or did Apollo follow him like a Hound of Heaven? No matter. Once for a few months, like A. E. Housman in 1895 or Wordsworth in 1797-98, Masters ran side by side with Apollo, alive and aflame. Whatever the rest of Masters's story may be, these months will outlive it all.

The rest of the story also is told down to about 1917 in "Across Spoon River." There was nothing in Petersburg or Lewistown—or at first in Chicago—to direct a young poet, and this particular poet was not sure and simple enough to direct himself. He read greedily, savagely, randomly. He could not quite make up his mind about a profession, he had to turn his hand to odd jobs to earn a living, he was slow in discovering his true idiom as poet, he held unpopular opinions that handicapped him as lawyer. He was susceptible to women, toward whom he seems to have been sometimes taurine, more often transcendental, like Goethe with his *ewig-weibliche*. The episodes of Masters's little loves, the drama of his infatuation over Deirdre, the history of his cool, dry marriage to the Golden Aura—these would be distractions if they were not so large a part of the story that at times they are the story. It is plain that he has by no means resolved some of his old intellectual conflicts yet. The narrative never steadies itself to a quiet stream but is still turbulent with its old vitality. Lacking grace because it is not serene, it is downright and honest, the blunt, ardent story of a troubled man finding out that he was a poet. CARL VAN DOREN

Tabasco and Fudge Sauce

THE MELANCHOLY LUTE. By Franklin P. Adams. The Viking Press. $2.50.

GAILY THE TROUBADOUR. By Arthur Guiterman. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.

VIRTUALLY all the town wits and lords of light verse have given F. P. A.'s "selected songs of thirty years" a send-off that makes the gaudiest blurb-writer sound like a master of understatement. The reviewer, dazed by such goings on—dazed, for example, to find Miss Dorothy Parker abandoning tabasco for fudge sauce—can only drop hastily on one knee. Who shall dissent when doctors don't disagree? he might reasonably ask before insisting, as he reasonably must, that for himself this output of thirty years seems a little bony, not quite so full of verve and gusto as it might have been. It is all according to the best recipe, has been cooked with a clock right on top of the stove, and certainly it never offends the palate; but it recalls somebody's classic comment, "There is no such thing as a *pretty* good omelette."

There is little point in being doctrinaire about light verse, but in order to be good I think it should show at least one of three qualities: charm, bounce, or bite. It must be more than amiable, and more than correct; and if much of its appeal is to be technical—which is open to some doubt—then it should offer a completely flowing and uncramped technique. Mr. Adams, so far as I am concerned, always makes one conscious of his craftsmanship: first, because it seems fussed over, but second, and more important, because his craftsmanship *is* his light verse. He has not many ideas, and his humor and satire, though pleasant, have not many sources. As for charm, bounce, and bite, he has a little of each and not enough of any.

Nothing could be more evident than F. P. A.'s genuine love and extraordinary knowledge of light verse. But it seems to me that his real role—by analogy with tennis, violin-playing, and the like—is that of a master coach and not that of a performer. His work has all the earmarks of the critic turned creative. It is flawless, but it lacks blood and bouquet; it is essentially academic, and there is something as professorial in Adams the poet as in Adams the man. He is constantly reverting to quotations, literary allusions, literary puns, archaisms, book-knowledge, Latin tags; and it is in vain that he attempts the personality of a fun-loving Tom Rover. This does not mean that he lacks personality; he has it; but possibly he has the wrong kind for light verse. The man who in The Conning Tower has compiled, by catching out our mistakes in English, a veritable Who's Whom in America; the man who knows that October 12, 1492, was a Friday and not a Wednesday; the man who probably remembers what he had to eat on July 16, 1895, has

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CAPRETAX BULLETIN

Number 2

(*CAPITAL-RELIEF-TAX*)

Marxism is Wrong!

That Karl Marx perceived the tremendous economic fact of Ground Monopoly too late in life; and that his tardy recognition of it was embodied in posthumous editions of "Capital" as an appendix having no organic relation with the body of the work; was pointed out in the preceding number of this bulletin.

Claiming that private capital is the original and fundamental force which exploits labor, Marx and his followers have never understood how Labor and Capital are joint victims of Ground Monopoly; that both Labor and Capital together must produce enough to liquidate ground rent and taxation before Labor can receive wages, and before Capital can draw interest or make profit.

Inaccurate Definition of "State"

That the modern "State" represents victory of the "bourgeoisie" (capitalists) over medieval groundlordism, is the false and preposterous doctrine advanced by Marx to explain the phenomena of modern parliamentary government.

As a matter of actual record, and provable from the structure of existing legislative institutions, the modern state (whose pattern originated in Britain) is a compromise between the historic prestige of Land and the economic energy of Capital. The failure of Marx and his followers to grasp this fact is correlated with the faulty Marxian proposition that Labor is oppressed and enslaved by Capital.

"Marxism vs. Fascism"— a False Issue

On the basis of these economic and political errors, Marx and his followers have precipitated the false claim that civilization is now compelled to choose between Common Ownership of Productive Capital and Private Business Enterprise.

Marxist propaganda has accordingly provoked and raised up the opposing force called "Fascism," which is based upon premises equally false with those of Marxism itself. *And in the face of this threatening new form of reaction, the disciples of Marx are now retreating into opportunism in search of allies among liberals and progressives, while temporarily holding in abeyance their platform calling for public ownership of productive capital.*

The strategic ideology of this move is that cooperating liberals will be automatically imbued with Marxism and become converts through acting against the common enemy. *The subtle intrusion of Marxists into the background of the liberal movement furnishes evidence which helps to justify Fascism and keep it alive.*

Today's Real Issue: Fate of Productive Capital

Since the modern State represents compromise between Capital and Ground Monopoly, *the logic slowly taking form in the midst of today's confusion is not class war between employers and employees, but the liberation of Productive Capital (as distinguished from "finance capital") by the transfer of taxation, as far as possible, from industrial and agricultural enterprise to ground values, improved and unimproved, in city and country.*

Issue Further Confused by Henry George and "Singletax"

To dismiss these propositions by saying, "Oh yes! Henry George!" is not only to credit the author of *Progress and Poverty* with more economic and sociological insight than his works reveal, but also to misread the unfolding of today's tragic history.

In a way which alienated men of wider acquaintance with economic thought, George proposed exclusive taxation of ground values on the theory that such values alone are "a social product, due to the presence of society"; whereas he assumed that capital pertains to "the individual," and therefore should not be taxed.

But capital (i.e., "productive instrumentalities") cannot be explained by individual reference. As a fact in today's world, it is the result of exploitation through past epochs. Capital is that portion of material goods which is used for the purpose of *producing more goods;* and as Dewey and Tufts have emphasized in specific contrast with George, "the wealth of modern society is really a gigantic pool. No individual knows how much he creates; it is a social product. To estimate what anyone should receive by an attempted estimate of what he has individually contributed is absolutely impossible" (*Ethics*, 511).

"Social value," as a measure of the distinction between land and capital, was unwittingly discarded by George himself in saying, *"the social organism secretes, as it were, the necessary amount of capital"* (*Progress and Poverty*, Bk. 1, ch. 5).

Adam Smith on Monopoly, Value, Exploitation, Taxation

"As soon as the land of any country has all become private property, the landlords, like all other men, love to reap where they never sowed, and demand a rent even for its natural produce . . . Nothing can be more reasonable than that a fund (i.e., ground rent) which owes its existence to the good government of the state should be taxed peculiarly, or should contribute something more than the greater part of other funds toward the support of the government" (*Wealth of Nations*, Bk. 1, ch. 6; Bk. 5, ch. 2).

Smith wrote at a time when it was dangerous to speak too plainly; and his real significance has been ignored not only by most professional economists, but also by Henry George.

"Capretax" not "Singletax"

The demand that fiscal burdens be shifted from productive capital to ground values is not based upon impossible distinctions between "social" and "individual" value; *it arises out of the urgent, but inarticulate, need of business and agriculture to be liberated from the intolerable pressure of inflationary ground rents and an unscientific revenue system which overburdens actual production while promoting speculation in land.* Hence the situation calls for a "capretax" (capital-relief-tax) rather than a "single," or exclusive, levy.

This measure is compatible with the cooperative program and with public ownership of enterprise involving exclusive rights-of-way over land, such as railroads, telegraph, telephone and pipe-line systems, etc.

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not perished in the poet. Moreover, Adams's greatest enthusiasm among light-verse writers is Calverley. I have always felt that Calverley has done the tradition a great deal of harm because, while he uniquely managed to perform miracles with dry form, as Bach did with fugues, he, like Bach, did all that could be done, leaving behind disciples who could not improve on him and were headed in the wrong direction—if not actually up a blind alley. Calverley is superb in his way, but it is a bookish way, and it is largely the bookishness that a man like Adams has inherited. Gilbert, less exquisite but more effervescent, has had more to bequeath even though his bequest has been more rudely handled. Unfortunately the two maestros between them have devoured modern light verse, and the poetic content that the Elizabethan and Caroline wits could squeeze into the form has all but disappeared. Adams, for example, lacks the faintest sense of style, which helps to account for his frequent woodenness. His really great service to light verse has been his admirable appreciation of it. The Conning Tower has printed more good stuff of the kind than all the other newspaper columns rolled into one.

In his new book Mr. Guiterman continues to be skilful. He lacks charm and bite, but his verses usually have bounce and swing, and he has a greater range of matter than F. P. A. He drops now and then into a kind of cuteness I would gladly spare, and his work has in it too little feeling for life and, like Adams's, a rather too unfailing sense of propriety. But it carries one along at a very agreeable pace. If Adams's chief fault lies in being too professorial, Guiterman's lies in being too professional. He is too smooth and slick to give one that unexpected sort of pleasure one seeks above everything else in light verse; and as Dr. Johnson might have said, if Mr. Guiterman seldom disappoints by sinking, he seldom exhilarates by soaring.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Craftsmanship

THE TALLONS. By William March. Random House. $2.50.

IN "The Tallons" Mr. March deviates from his usual position of gentle irony and Chekhovian despair over life's problems, and attempts a tragedy on the grand scale. Two brothers, living on a farm in a small Alabama community, love the same girl. Andrew Tallon is idealistic, dependable, and physically repulsive (he has a harelip and a defect in his speech); Jim Tallon has all the contrasting qualities of thoughtlessness and physical charm. It is Jim, of course, who marries the girl; and when he brings her home to the Tallon farm, he insists that Andrew continue to live there. Andrew's presence, however, is a constant spur to his jealousy: there are violent quarrels and a general atmosphere of tension and hate. One night, after a particularly brutal scene, Andrew intervenes and kills his brother. With the assistance of Myrtle (Jim's widow), he is able successfully to conceal the crime; but his conscience gives him no peace—and he finally confesses. His love for his brother's wife is taken as the obvious motive for the crime; and he is convicted of murder in the first degree.

"The Tallons" has all the virtues of the realistic tradition: intelligence, honesty, detachment, and skill. It is upon these virtues, indeed, that Mr. March's reputation as a writer is based; and for such themes as have occupied him in the past —compassionate studies of "little men" pitted against some universal fate beyond their control or understanding—they are indispensable. Yet it is to be doubted whether they will suffice for such a study of the passions as the present book aims to portray. For the tragedy in "The Tallons" is the tragedy of individual wills: the fate which pursues and destroys the leading characters rises out of certain maladies peculiar to each—Myrtle's vanity, her savage desire to possess Jim at all costs, Jim's jealousy, Andrew's love for an inferior woman. And tragedy of this kind demands something more than mere discernment or a talent for narrative—be the author's eye ever so sure or his statements ever so convincing.

There must first of all be full-sized individuals; and while Andrew comes closest to satisfying us in this regard—he is plausible so long as the drama surrounding him remains familiar and unimpressive—as soon as he is posed against an event of startling proportions he stands revealed for the conventional figure that he is. But what is chiefly lacking in this tragedy is the tragic sense—that element of power which can take us beyond the act into the significance of the act: we feel at all times in the presence of craftsmanship rather than of power. There are times, too, when Mr. March's craftsmanship, expert though it generally is, tends rather to betray itself; when certain situations of prime importance to the plot appear to have been unduly forced. Jim's transformation from an easy-going, self-confident wastrel into a neurotically jealous husband—suspicious above all of his unattractive brother Andrew—is too sudden to be thoroughly credible. But neither these defects in composition nor the book's more serious weaknesses prevent it from being an extremely readable and for the most part honest piece of work.

HELEN NEVILLE

Murder with a Moral

DEATH IN THE DEEP SOUTH. By Ward Greene. Stackpole Sons. $2.

IN this novel about murder in Georgia, Mr. Greene has made an interesting departure from the usual pattern of crime stories. His long experience as a newspaper reporter has left him dissatisfied with the elaborate ingenuities of master-mind detectives who, in fiction, monotonously solve mysteries as remote from reality as a card trick or a cross-word puzzle. Mr. Greene has examined the news behind the distortions of the yellow press and has rewritten it in a swiftly moving narrative. To be sure, he has not been so imprudent as to omit trial scenes and unexpected clues; but he has used these conventional devices to dramatize a serious social problem—the annulment of civil liberties by local politicians who manipulate prejudices for the sake of the election returns.

The rape and murder of fifteen-year-old Mary Clay provides a perfect campaign issue for District Attorney Andy Griffin. Shrewd and ambitious, Griffin blocks the inevitable conspiracy to lynch Tump Redwine, Negro, who is implicated in the murder more by his color than by the flimsy evidence which has been cooked up against him. Lynchings, as Griffin cynically calculates, are too common to keep the headlines for more than a day; as a candidate for higher office he prefers to scoop his fellow-Democrats by making a big and unusual kill. The crime is pinned on Robert Hale, who has the double advantage, from Griffin's point of view, of being a school teacher with ideas and a Northerner. Most unscrupulously a case is manufactured against young Hale, a case which is plausible only to a jury poisoned with rhetorical insinuation. In a last gesture of cynicism the prosecution momentarily abandons the hypocrisy of white superiority and produces the Negro, coached by whippings and lies, as star witness against Hale. In the North the case becomes a *cause célèbre* for progressives; but Griffin's

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strong-arm tactics defeat the superior logic of the Civil Liberties lawyers and the eloquent protestations of Heywood Broun. Griffin gets his man, and the nomination for Senator.

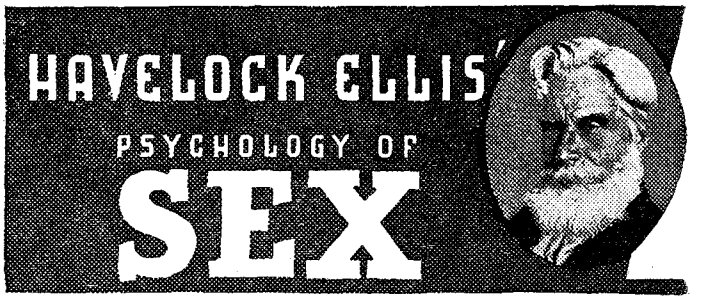
Mr. Greene hints in his text, and the publishers expand the hint in the blurb, that there is an analogy between the Hale case and the trials of Mooney, Sacco and Vanzetti, and the Scottsboro boys. But this suggestion is altogether misleading, although it does, by contrast, indicate the limited scope of the novel. Hale is not at all a symbol of class conflict; he is, as we are constantly reminded, an average citizen, a fairly characterless innocent bystander. The case against him is motivated not by the pressure of a threatened group in power but by the ambitions of a provincial schemer. The significance of the frame-up is correspondingly less great than the significance of the historic trials of a Mooney or a Vanzetti. The benevolent governor of this novel, who pits himself ineffectually against the district attorney, introduces another note of extenuation which is conspicuously missing in real political trials. But this does not invalidate the unavoidable conclusion of the novel that justice in the courts is still largely an abstraction, that behind the excitement of the headlines lies a frequently untold story of duplicity and terror. SAMUEL SILLEN

Motor as Metaphor

CLUTCH AND DIFFERENTIAL. By George Weller. Random House. $2.50.

THE clutch of an automobile (so I am told) is the mechanism which transmits the engine's power to the rear wheels; the differential is the mechanism which permits two wheels on the same axle to revolve at different speeds. Using these two devices as the symbols of two categories of experience, Mr. Weller's "novel" is an arrangement of thirty-five sketches of Americans. Those who are in the "clutch" category receive some impetus of personal vitality, either for good or bad ends; the "differential" sketches show two lives becoming in some way desynchronized. Each "clutch" incident is preceded by a brief prologue called "Change of Gear" in which the character gives a clue to his nature by a monologue about an automobile; each "clutch" is followed and each "differential" preceded by a section called "Universal" (after the coupling in the power-transmission shaft), which contains some bit of lore about cars—advertisements, the traffic cop's spiel, the ethics of the road, how to break in the new job, the truth about men and women drivers—a weighty *summa* of automotive philosophy. Carrying stylization yet farther, Mr. Weller Plutarchianly pairs off his male and female characters and arranges them in ascending order of age (speed? mileage?); so that we begin with Irene, six, and end with Mrs. Julia Rawson, seventy-eight. In short, Mr. Weller has written a book in which pattern takes the place of form and convention substitutes for plot, for each incident is discrete and the characters of one sketch are never involved with those of another. The only integration lies in the relationships of similarity and contrast which the author chooses to show.

The use of pattern as something apart from plot has been one of the important characteristics of modern fiction since the appearance of "Ulysses"; our awareness of social groups and social contrasts makes it pertinent. Mr. Weller is original only in that he relies on pattern to the total exclusion of a continuing narrative. In Dos Passos's novels, for example, or in "Ulysses" itself, the pattern advances and underscores the plot but does not take its place or invalidate the Aristotlean virtues of Beginning, Middle, and End. But Mr. Weller re-



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fuses to recognize these virtues, and consequently he deadens utterly the effect of a book that has elements of significance.

To understand how thoroughly Mr. Weller's experiment has failed we must remember that he is a writer of very considerable talent. Indeed, his first novel, "Not to Eat, Not for Love," was so brimful of talent that it slopped over untidily; it was tricky, extravagant, and clever, but nevertheless it was successful and moving. Mr. Weller's talent has not really diminished, but by comparison with the first novel its effect in "Clutch and Differential" is trifling. The symbolic pattern in itself says nothing, or only something very trite, about the machine age. The author's fine poetic gifts are unorganized and diffuse and, what is more, they serve sentimentality rather than illumination. It is not unfair to turn Mr. Weller's symbol against him and to say that his book is imbued with the sentimentality of the motorist who has been "studying the country" on the road—that fine, false sense of having "learned human nature" which one gets from the chance meeting.

Not all of Mr. Weller's knowledge of what people are like can rescue his characters from the cliché abstraction into which the pattern forces them. Had they appeared in a novel, Monty's wife, the Negro porter, Mr. Hargreave, Randolph Lewis Beebe would have been very real people, but set in the easy and pointless pattern they become static, like figures in a dull mural, the Bride with Eyes to the Future, the Exploited Negro, the Ruthless Industrialist, Intrenched Bureaucracy—all in appropriate attitudes of self-explanation, with a running frieze of carburetors and traffic lights. But Mr. Weller's talent is still there, and if his experiment has failed his promise has not.

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Japanese War Power

MILITARISM IN JAPAN. By Kenneth W. Colegrove. World Peace Foundation. 75 cents.

THE World Peace Foundation continues its informative series of pamphlets on world affairs with this study of the factors behind the power of the military in Japan. Mr. Colegrove finds the source of the military tradition in the military clans and emperor loyalty, and regards the existence of the "supreme command" as one of the basic reasons for the strength of the military class. The constitution of 1889 made the "supreme direction" of the army and navy "subject solely to commands issued by the Emperor." This provision has put Japan under a dual government, the civil government having no control over the military. While the Emperor's power is supposed to be exercised with the advice of "responsible ministers," the jurists of the old school—they also have their "old men" it seems—and the militarists have held that this term applies only to the ministers of war and the navy. These Cabinet posts, in turn, are open only to high-ranking officers; so that the military can wreck any Cabinet by refusal to serve in it. This, however, requires unanimity among the generals, and it is to the lack of such unanimity in 1930 that the author attributes the ratification of the London Naval Treaty, which he says "marked the culmination of the progress toward parliamentary government."

Dual government has also led to dual diplomacy, and the army has in many instances ignored the decisions of the Foreign Office. In 1931, for instance, "after the 'Mukden incident,' Baron Shidehara's policy of friendship with China, which had the support of the Cabinet and of a majority of the Diet, was completely frustrated by the independent action of the military." While Mr. Colegrove believes that the several failures of the army to establish a complete military dictatorship give ground for hope that the civil authorities are gaining the upper hand, he recognizes that this would hardly signify an end of Japanese imperialism since the control of the major parties is in the hands of the financial interests which have profited most from the vast military expenditures.

Of interest to American readers will be Mr. Colegrove's account of the effects in Japan of our recent increases in naval expenditures and the Pacific maneuvers. By picturing these moves and the increases in the Russian military forces as a direct threat to Japan, General Araki succeeded in securing vast increases in military and naval appropriations. It is significant that General Araki's further suggestions that the tax burden be shifted from the farmers to capital and industry were turned down. The tie-up between industry and the military machine is obviously closer than this book reveals. And the author confesses as much. In his final paragraph he says, "All too brief is this survey of militarism in Japan. Much more remains to be said regarding the munitions industry, regarding the imperialist program of Japanese capitalism, regarding the corrupt alliance of political parties and financial interests . . ." It is to be hoped that Mr. Colegrove will have the opportunity of discussing this most important phase of the subject in a future pamphlet.

R. J. BISSON

Shorter Notices

THAT WAS BALZAC. By George Middleton. Random House. $2.

Honoré De Balzac was a man of exuberant genius; and his other qualities seem to have been dealt out to him in the same extravagant measure. Says Mr. Middleton in his Introduction: "Balzac never conceived a more amazing character than he himself was, nor wrote a more spectacular novel than the life he lived." And then he proceeds to prove it in this play. In recreating this gargantuan character, the author has used biographical material as Rodin, before whose famous statue of Balzac the prologue takes place, used the sculptor's clay—to convey the essence of the man. Indeed, this prologue serves as a not altogether necessary defense of the method, which really needs no defense beyond his success with it. Here is no mere story about Balzac, but the man and artist in all his magnificent, contradictory, and faintly preposterous reality, from the youth of twenty, dreaming and working prodigiously in a Paris attic, to the dying man of fifty, lamenting that he has burned himself out before having finished the stupendous task he had set himself. The eight episodes depend for dramatic continuity and tension upon the novelist's relations with three women: his jealous, self-pitying, and loyal mother; the wise middle-aged woman who was his first love; and the beautiful Polish countess with whom he carried on for eighteen years that strange love affair which led at last to their marriage a few months before his death. Like Balzac himself, these women really come to life in the pages of this book; and so do a host of minor characters who contribute their services to the building up of Mr. Middleton's vivid portrait. The play reads well and should produce well. One longs to see it acted, with someone like Charles Laughton in the title role.

S. L.

SKUTAREVSKY. By Leonid Leonov. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.

"Skutarevsky," called "the Russian Arrowsmith," is said to have had an enormous success in the Soviet Union. It is possibly mainly the fault of the translator, Alec Brown, that

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in English the novel appears confused and [illegible]listically the book seems to run in clots. The[illegible]s of great force, precision, and clarity; but there also stretches of dreadful verbal awkwardness and downright unintelligibility. The novel is the story of the adjustment of a great scientist of Czarist days to the planned scientific program of the Soviet regime. Consequently, the imagery is largely scientific; the simplest, everyday human acts are frequently interpreted in the language of physics. Out of the application of the scientist's vocabulary to the material of life come some of the novel's best effects, but this technique is likewise responsible for the grossest faults of the book; overused, it makes for ponderousness and verbosity. The flaws of "Skutarevsky" are, however, not all stylistic. The book is overloaded; too many things are started and dropped. With most of its themes unresolved at the conclusion, the novel, for all its striking qualities, is unsatisfactory.

MARY MCCARTHY

DRAMA

Red, Hot, and Blue

IT seems that Mrs. "Nails" Duquesne—known in private life as Ethel Merman—is desperately in love with a young man who finds it impossible to return her affections because he is fixed upon a girl he has not seen since she was five, and it seems further that "Nails" is heroically determined to help him find her. Now you might suppose the task nearly impossible, but that is because you do not know an important fact, namely, that at the tender age mentioned above the unfortunate girl sat down, while attempting to elude a kiss, upon a waffle iron all prepared to receive something else. Obviously the sensible thing to do is to institute a nation-wide hunt for the missing young lady, and obviously—from a dramatic standpoint—it is a good idea to let the audience participate in the hunt by requiring all the claimants to parade in cellophane skirts through a brightly illuminated doorway. I shall not go so far as to reveal by what surprising accident the long-lost love is actually discovered outside the ranks of the formally qualified pretenders, but I have already gone far enough, I hope, to indicate in a general way the spirit of the book which Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay have provided for the music and lyrics of Cole Porter.

"Red, Hot, and Blue" (Alvin Theater) is the name of the piece, and it provides an evening of good, cleaner-than-you-might-expect fun. It is not, to be sure, as good as "Anything Goes." Even the presence of Jimmy Durante cannot conceal the fact, and even Ethel Merman cannot persuade an audience that any of Mr. Porter's new songs is as exasperatingly insouciant as "I Get a Kick Out of You." But probably Mr. Porter will never be able to live up to that again, and if comparisons can be forgotten, "Red, Hot, and Blue" is far above the revue average. Miss Merman remains supreme as the exponent of a style she seems to have invented. No one else that I have ever heard seems to me to have achieved a combination of superficial blatancy with subtle undercurrents of nuance and satire so perfectly the expression of the spirit of jazz.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

[Correction:—George Nash is First Gravedigger in the Gielgud "Hamlet."]

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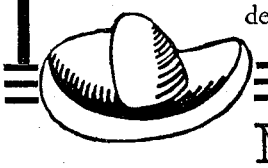

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Foreword by Rafael Ramirez

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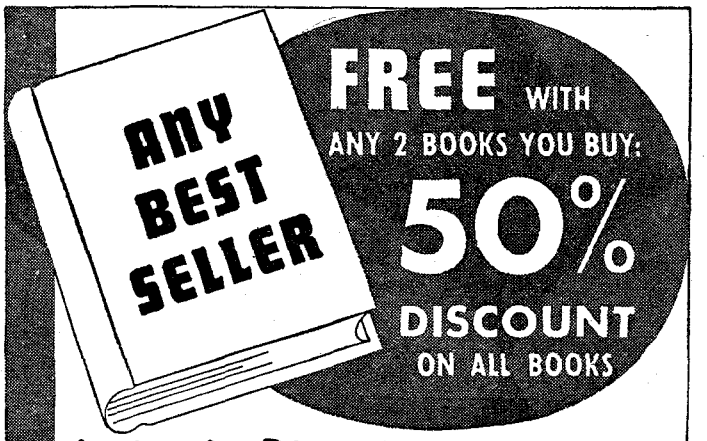

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In "Forbidden Melody" (New Amsterdam Theater) Hollywood's Mr. Brisson sings, dances, and dimples at unpredictable intervals and devotes the remainder of his energies to a consideration of his librettist's dashing Rumanian Lieutenant Gregor. After eleven more or less complete shifts of scene Mr. Brisson, with the aid of a bassoon-playing comic, sings his way into a tangle of ladies and restores to his throne the banished King Carol. The ingredients are not unfamiliar, and Mr. Romberg, along with his colleague, Otto Harbach, has been to the attic for his tunes. The result is a rehash of the Graustark fable which stupefies the spectator with gipsy fiddling in the opening scenes and puts him to sleep in—of all places—the royal suite of the Hotel Buda. B. B.

RECORDS

THE interest expressed by readers of this column led me to investigate the subject of needles further; and I can now amplify my recent remarks with factual detail. Bear in mind that we are concerned only with the minute point that travels in the grooves of the record, and that I am beginning with steel. The point must be slender and rounded so as to fit into the groove; its surface must be smooth, otherwise its action on the walls of the groove will be that of a file or a saw, and these are things that cannot be observed by the naked eye. Variations in the shape of the point, by altering the contact of the point with the groove, produce variations in reproduction; and the variations I heard recently in the sound of the record[illegible] Second matched the variations I had seen in th[illegible]he points of Columbia half-tone needles when[illegible] looked at them through a microscope last August. Also, certain variants—for example, those which are squared instead of rounded—may injure the walls of the grooves; and so will accidental broken, jagged points or rough surfaces. Such imperfections are inevitable, and can be detected only by shadowgraphing each needle separately. This is a laborious process that makes shadowgraphed needles more expensive; but if you want a perfect needle you will have to pay what it costs; and H. W. Acton of 370 Seventh Avenue, New York, has it to sell.

The wearing down of the point results from the presence of abrasive in the record. The effect of the abrasive at first is to cause the needle to fit better in the groove; as it continues it creates a flat surface with sharp edges; and if the needle is worn down to the point where these edges are brought into contact with the walls of the grooves they will cut away what is recorded on the walls. Hence the admonition to use a needle for only one record-side. This is extreme; but what is essential is not to put back a used needle once it has been removed, for the changed position may bring the sharp edges into contact with the walls of the grooves.

It is here that cactus and other non-metallic needles enter the discussion: they cannot injure the record when they are worn down, because their substance is too soft for their edges to cut into the substance of the record. They have this advantage, however, only at this stage of wear in the needle; before this stage—before, that is, the point of wear at which the steel needle begins to damage the grooves—the softness of non-metallic needles is no advantage and is a definite disadvantage: they are not hard enough to bring out the sounds of high frequency that are what is meant by high fidelity. There is no use in getting the finest new orchestral records and a phonograph with pick-up, amplifier, and speaker capable of bringing out what has been put into the records, and then using a needle that keeps this from coming through. And it is silly to do this to avoid scratch: non-metallic needles reduce scratch because they do not bring out the high frequencies; if you want the musical sounds of high frequency you must use steel and accept the noises of high frequency as well.

Chromium is even harder than steel, and therefore brings out even more of the high frequencies, as you can tell by the greater scratch. But the chromium-plated point is dangerous. No process has yet been found of plating the point uniformly; sometimes only one side gets plated; and if you put in the needle so that this side happens to face the wrong way, you have, in effect, two sharp cutting edges traveling through the grooves of your records.

Now chromium and other permanent needles have been introduced for people who don't like the trouble of changing records or needles. Since these needles are all bad, it would seem that one must either take the trouble or ruin the records (and I am informed that certain machines with record-changing mechanisms give faulty reproduction and have heavy and badly placed pick-ups that will ruin records with any needle). But though he does not want to go on record as recommending the practice, Acton thinks his shadowgraphed steel needle can be used safely for a number of sides.

Steel needles, then; and half-tone rather than full-tone, because the shank of a half-tone needle being slenderer there is less rigidity and greater play in the groove. This makes a slight difference in quality of reproduction, but one that I like; and the loss in volume can be made up by amplification.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

"The Pope Needs America"

Dear Sirs: In religion I am a Roman Catholic and in politics I am registered as a Democrat. But neither my Catholicism nor my registered Democracy have had much influence on my political opinions. I make these personal statements for what relevance they may have to my criticism of James T. Farrell's two articles, The Pope Needs America.

I am perfectly willing to admit that the Catholic church has meddled in European politics at least since medieval times. Its influence, however, has waned. Spain is the most recent example of this trend. I am also willing to admit that the Catholic church has stepped from religion into politics too often in Mexico and South America. I even admit the all too frequent interest of the Catholic hierarchy in local politics throughout these United States.

There may naturally be the thought that the Catholics, because of their large numbers and because of the wealth the Catholic church has amassed, might if united be a controlling force in national politics. But the Catholics of America are historically disunited. They are Democrats and Republicans and Independents, Progressives and Farmer-Laborites, Prohibitionists, Coughlinites, and Townsendites. They are as widely split as the poles. And they are, thank God, increasingly refusing political suggestions from the church. While no doubt in some localities Catholic organizations will be used and abused politically, the normal Holy Name Society will remain a religious organization; the normal Knights of Columbus branch will continue as a social organization; the normal St. Vincent de Paul Society will go on as a charitable organization. And never will they be welded into a national political group. It is much more foolish to presume the political menace of Catholic Action than to presume a dictatorship by either major political party.

Together with many Americans I am a firm objector to political influence on the part of clerics, no matter what their faith. And I believe this country has no more to fear from Catholic political dominance than from Methodist or Baptist or Presbyterian or, for that matter, Mohammedan political leadership. Certainly that great mass of Catholics who enjoy the privileges our country gives of thinking and acting for themselves will never surrender these constitutional rights to any dominant political force.

JAMES KERNEY, JR.,
Editor, the Trenton *Times*
Trenton, N. J., October 29

We're for It!

Dear Sirs: Now that the Presidential campaign of 1936 is ended, the time is ripe to begin the agitation for a reform of incalculable value to the country—the shortening of the campaign. Let the nominating conventions be held between the first and the twentieth of September. Between the time of the conventions and Election Day every important issue could be clearly and adequately put before the voters.

At no time within my recollection (I cast my first vote for Grover Cleveland in 1892) has so large a proportion of the campaign discussion been devoted to banalities and shadow-boxing, not to speak of "You're another" personalities, as in this campaign. The effect of all this is to repel and disgust thoughtful people. Many of them, but for a sense of duty to their country, would say, "A plague o' both your houses," and spend Election Day in attending to their own business.

G. S. W.
Westminster, Md., November 2

A Scandal in Chicago

Dear Sirs: Having been a resident of New York City and a reader of the *Times* and the *World-Telegram* until a new position brought me to Chicago six months ago, I was quite unprepared for the yellow journalism and partisan news of Chicago. I set about immediately to find a readable newspaper, one that would fill the gap left by the New York papers. Being able to smell a Hearst a mile away, I steered clear of the *Herald Examiner* and bought the only other morning paper available, the *Tribune*. The layout impressed me as being neat and attractive, but I soon discovered that the *Tribune's* content out-Hearsts Hearst.

In the evening I caught the odors of another Hearst product, the *American,* and hurried on to the *Daily News,* which I had heard of in connection with John Gunther, Howard Vincent O'Brien, and Edgar Ansel Mowrer, and therefore expected to find somewhat more wholesome than the rest. But again I was disappointed. The *Daily News,* I found, was as reactionary as its editor, Frank Knox. Another Chicago paper, the *Daily Times,* a tabloid in the best tradition, in all seriousness impresses me as being quite on a par with the *Daily News,* which seems to be Chicago's best—or should I say least obnoxious—newspaper.

There must be other residents of this city who are as indignant about the press situation as I am. And it is with this thought in mind that I am writing to you. Perhaps something could be done to encourage the Scripps-Howard syndicate to enter this field, or maybe the New York *Times* could devise a plan for flying early editions into this city. At any rate, organized action on the part of Chicago's citizens might bring about some solution to a problem which is a scandal not only for Chicago but for the nation as well.

D. J. ROLFS
Oak Park, Ill., October 22

Gentlemanly Insecurity

Dear Sirs: Dr. Floyd S. Winslow in an address before the New York State Medical Society on September 17 makes the following very extraordinary statement:

> The advocates of socialized medicine lure the profession with the siren song of bureaucratic jobs . . . But we do not want to be secure. We want to remain insecure. We want to continue to be required to give our very best to every patient or lose out in the gentlemanly competition which exists within our ranks. This is an incentive which operates to our insecurity, but to the security of the patient. We prefer the discipline of private practice, which keeps us on our toes, to an assured income under bureaucratic control where our highest ambition is more likely to be to keep ourselves solid with the politicians who have taken over the job of running our profession.

It should no longer be necessary to try to convince intelligent persons that financial insecurity within the medical profession itself increases the insecurity of everyone who must depend on the members of that profession. If insecurity for all doctors meant security for all patients I believe that most persons would say by all means let physicians be financially insecure. But it does not. On the contrary,

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Tomorrow's Headlines TODAY— in The Nation

Applied to politics, this statement invites trouble. Yet, the accuracy of Paul W. Ward's predictions during the Presidential election campaign seem incredible.

PAUL W. WARD

As early as July 11, for example, Mr. Ward stated that despite the extravagant claims of the Union Party leaders, Lemke would prove of little importance in the campaign and would actually run "at the expense of the Republican nominee and not, as Mr. Landon, his aides and mentors so patently believe, at the expense of Mr. Roosevelt."

On August 3 the polls conducted by the *Literary Digest,* Dr. Gallup, and the *Farm Journal* predicted victory for Landon. Yet, in *The Nation* of that week Mr. Ward stated that "Roosevelt will have a record-breaking total of 510 electoral votes."

During the months preceding the election, the accuracy of Mr. Ward's keen analysis of the factors which eventually caused the Roosevelt landslide and the larger Democratic majority in Congress, added immensely to his reputation as a political prophet.

As the symposium in this issue indicates, the turn our political future may take seems uncertain. On the basis of past performances, however, readers of Paul W. Ward's weekly article in *The Nation* are very likely to know, far in advance of its appearance in the headlines, all the significant news that will come out of Washington during the next few years.

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LOUISE DAVIES

Ventura, Cal., October 9

Correction

Dear Sirs: My attention has just been called to the editorial which appeared in *The Nation* for October 31 on my case. I want to call your attention to the following inaccuracies:

1. I came to Yale in the fall of 1924 and was promoted to the associate professorship in 1927, not in 1930 as stated by you.

2. A letter was written by Mr. Cheney to Dean Brown, not to Dean Weigle.

3. President Angell did not insist on the cancelation of the Senator Nye meeting but did insist on postponement. However, the tickets were on sale, and the result was that Senator Nye did not come to New Haven at all.

I want you to understand that my only reason for writing is to avoid any possible misrepresentation in my case.

JEROME DAVIS

New Haven, November 2

The Cooperative Movement

Dear Sirs: In reporting the Biennial Congress of the Cooperative League at Columbus October 8-10, in your editorial columns you make the very pertinent statement that "there are limits to the advantages to consumers' cooperation." Your criticism is very well taken, but to readers not familiar with the cooperative movement it would imply that the members of the cooperatives look upon consumers' cooperation as a panacea.

The attitude of the cooperative movement toward other movements working toward the same goal is exemplified in the following statement by E. R. Bowen, general secretary, in his address to the Cooperative Congress:

> We are happy to have on our program representatives of the three national consumer organizations, namely, consumers' cooperatives, credit unions, and public utilities, and the three national producer organizations, namely farm cooperatives, labor unions, and professional associations, the combination of whose programs into one great whole, I believe, will eventually largely solve our problems of unemployment and poverty as well as the economic causes of crime and war.

WALLACE J. CAMPBELL,
Assistant Secretary

New York, October 15

CONTRIBUTORS

THE CONTRIBUTORS to the symposium are Norman Thomas, Presidential candidate of the Socialist Party; John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America and chairman of the Committee for Industrial Organization; Alvin Johnson, president of the American Economic Association and director of the New School for Social Research; Mary Van Kleeck, chairman of the Interprofessional Association for Social Insurance and director of the Department of Industrial Studies of the Russell Sage Foundation; Charles A. Beard, political theorist and the country's leading constitutional historian; Dorothy Detzer, chairman of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Mary Simkhovitch, dean of social workers and director of Greenwich House.

DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE is the author of "Green Laurels," a book about the great naturalists, which on its publication a short time ago was received with enthusiasm by the critics. He has also published "An Almanac for Moderns" and "Singing in the Wilderness," a biography of Audubon.

HELEN NEVILLE is a poet and critic who has contributed reviews to *The Nation* and other periodicals.

SAMUEL SILLEN is a member of the English faculty of Washington Square College, New York University, and a contributing editor of *Science and Society,* the new Marxist quarterly.

LIONEL TRILLING is a member of the English Department of Columbia University.

R. J. BISSON is a free-lance reviewer with a special interest in the Far East.

B. H. HAGGIN, *The Nation's* music critic, has just finished "A Book of the Symphony," which will be published shortly. It deals with the history of symphonic composition and includes criticism and analysis of the most important works of the great composers.

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